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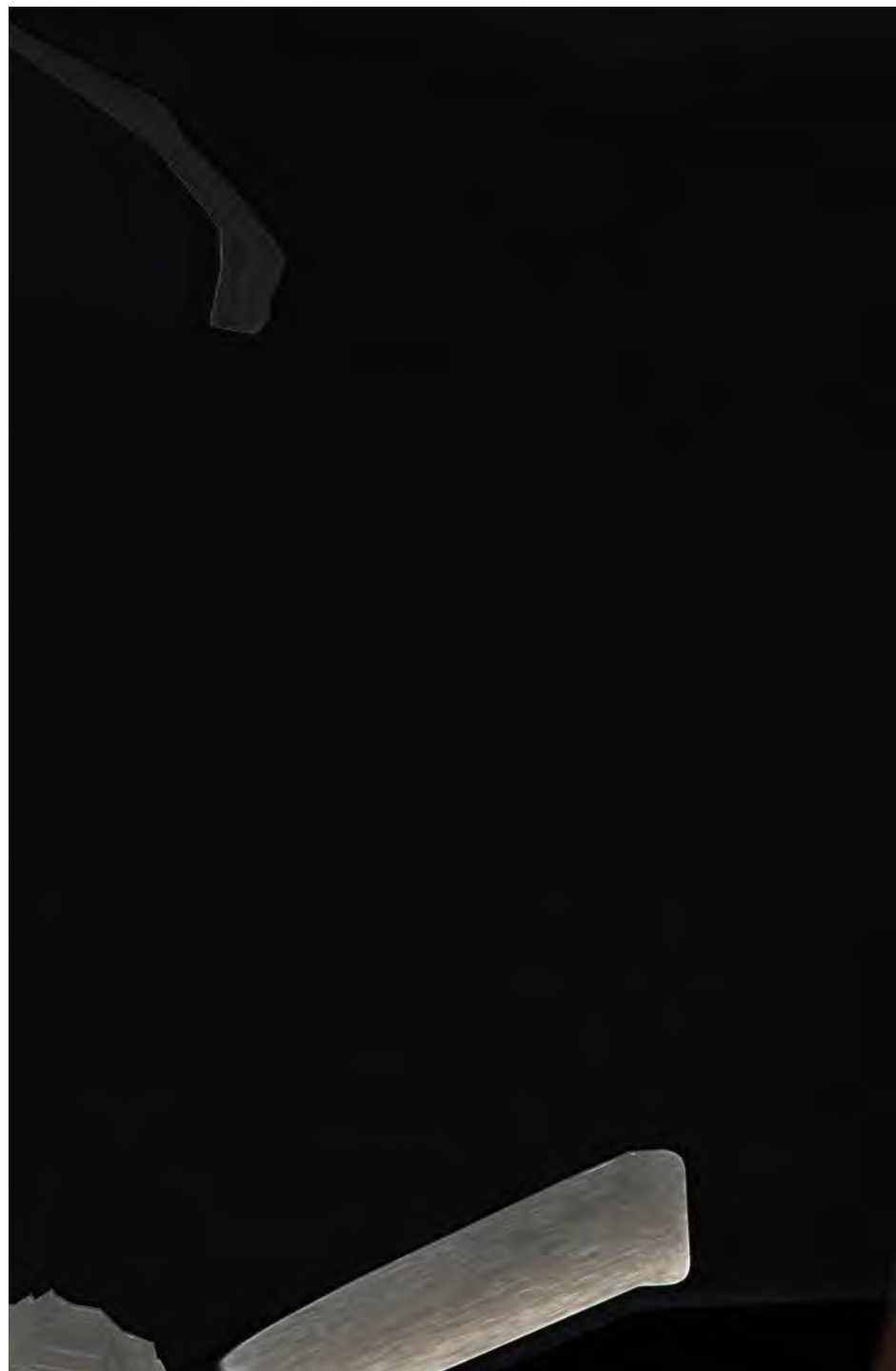
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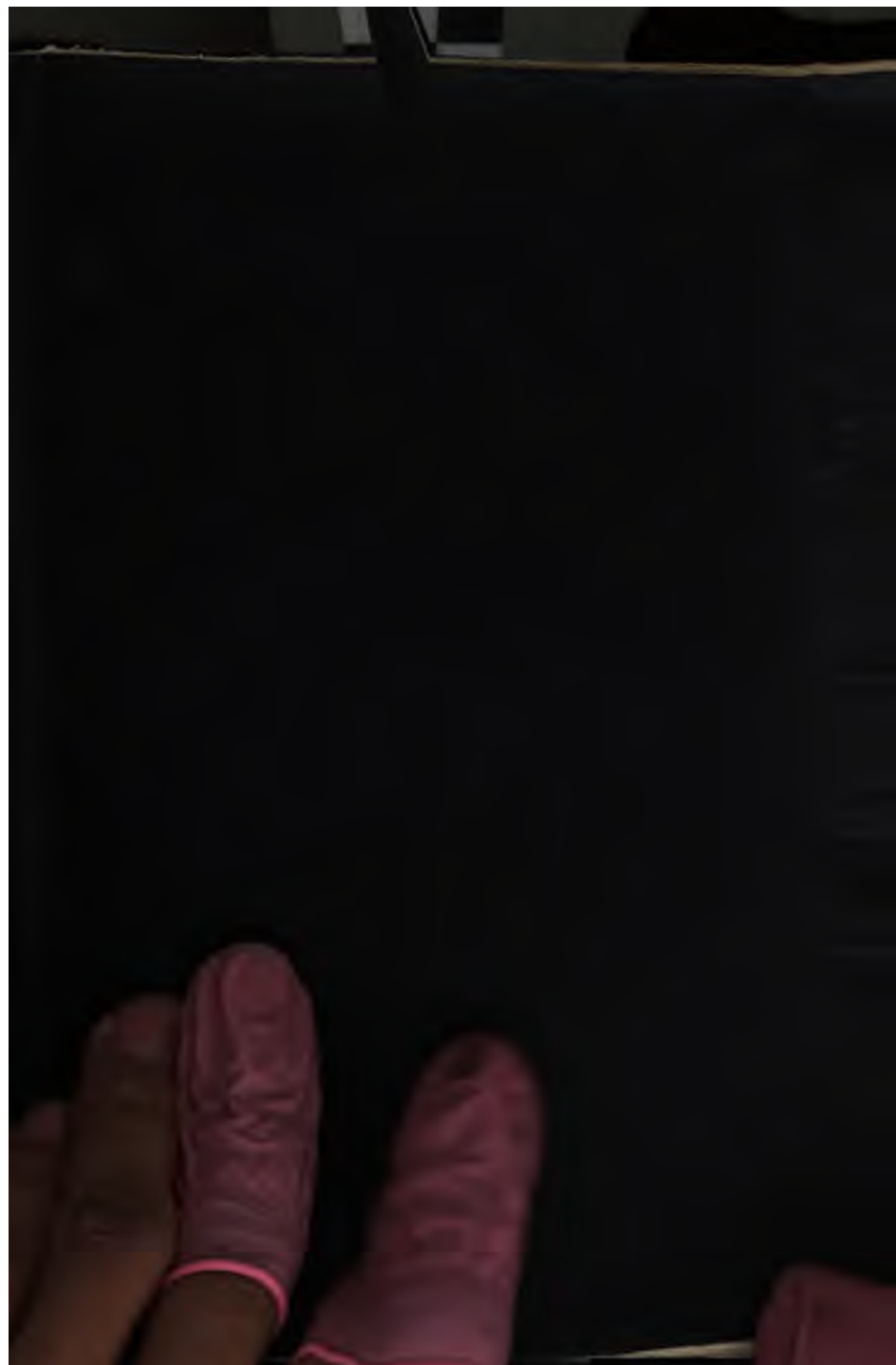
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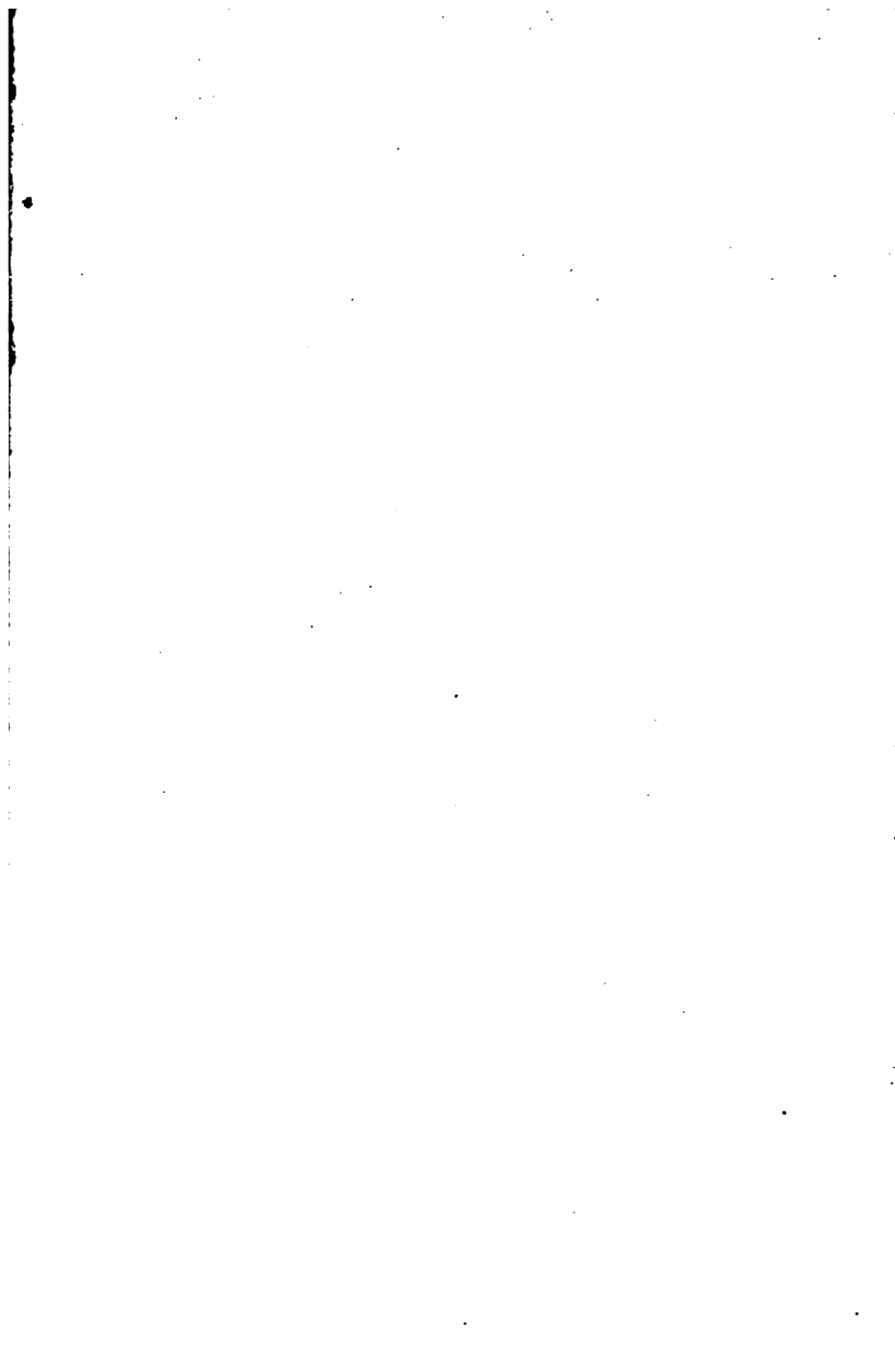
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Yours faithfully,

Thos. Newberry.

LECTURES AND ADDRESSES

POLITICAL, SOCIAL, LITERARY.

BY

THOMAS NEWBING.

With a Biographical sketch and Portrait.

JOHN HEALY, F.R.S.
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER;
LECTURER IN SOCIAL SCIENCE,
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON.
1881.

SPEECHES AND ADDRESSES

POLITICAL, SOCIAL, LITERARY.

BY

THOMAS NEWBIGGING.

With a Biographical Sketch and Portrait.

JOHN HEYWOOD,
DEANSGATE AND RIDGEFIELD, MANCHESTER;
AND 11, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS
LONDON.
1887.



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INTRODUCTION.

IN consenting to the publication of the Speeches and Addresses contained in the present volume, their Author has yielded to a wish apparently so general, and certainly so often and warmly urged upon him, that to have longer withheld compliance must have seemed either affectation or discourtesy.

It is fitting that the volume should be prefaced by a brief biographical sketch of Mr. Newbigging, for there is always an instinctive and justifiable desire to know something of the life of a man who comes worthily into distinct relief in any marked public way.

Although the circumstances which brought our Author into sudden prominence will not have been forgotten, a short reference to them is desirable.

The General Election of 1886 was followed everywhere in the United Kingdom with a keenness of interest that became almost painfully intense. Why this interest was so phenomenally acute was not obscured in any doubt. Not only did the magnitude of the single question at issue bear with gravest weight upon the mind of every elector who was conscious of his responsibilities, but, beyond this, the issue was an unusually doubtful one. The recession of an important Liberal following from the Irish policy of Mr. Gladstone's Government was a new and disturbing element in the political atmosphere, the force and direction of which could not be easily foreseen. This was a powerful factor in intensifying both the interest in the general result and, in a more personal way, the local interest of each constituency.

In no Parliamentary Division was this interest strung to a more intense pitch than in the Rossendale Division of the County of Lancashire, and in that stress of local feeling the nation at large shared. It was a Liberal constituency. Lord Hartington was the sitting member, and Lord Hartington was the chief of the disaffected Liberals. His abilities, his character, the staunchness of his Liberalism, had given him commanding weight in the constituency. It had been hopeless for a Tory to attempt to wrest the seat from him. But now, upon the

question of the hour, Lord Hartington and the Tories were one. Their support was at his disposal, and the question arose, "What were the Liberals of Rossendale to do under the circumstances?"

The great majority of the Liberals of Rossendale bestirred themselves. It was not a time, nor were they the men, to spike guns or show a white flag. But a candidate was a prime necessity, and they found him not far from their own doors. Wholly unknown in political life, but well known and highly esteemed in fields of activity where he made less stir in the world, of intense convictions upon the Irish policy of the then Government, and with the courage of his opinions, Mr. Thomas Newbigging consented to contest the seat with Lord Hartington. The project was cried down by many as a forlorn hope. The result established two things: the personal prestige of Lord Hartington, which counted for very much in placing him at the head of the poll, and that Mr. Newbigging was a man to be seriously reckoned with in any future contest.

The speeches of Mr. Newbigging in this contest began from the first to attract wide attention. They were distinguished by a grasp of political principles not by any means always found in the trained politician; by that same breadth of just, critical, analysis which will be noted in his addresses on more purely economic questions and in his literary productions; by a fair, courageous, and courteous estimate of his opponent; and by a quiet, persuasive power of presentation. Whatever there was of perplexity, doubt, dismay, in the ranks he was called to lead, his leadership instantly effaced, and converted into a hopeful and vigorous enthusiasm that was half the battle. Lord Hartington's presence in the Division became a necessity, and the contest was followed far beyond its confines with a great and constantly increasing interest. Though the odds were too great for Mr. Newbigging to overcome, both of the contestants, the successful and the unsuccessful, came out from the encounter as men who had fought not only stoutly but honourably, and each had the satisfaction that comes of the consciousness of having met a worthy opponent.

Although it was under these circumstances, and so recently, that Mr. Newbigging made a public entrance upon political life, he had in past years been closely connected with the local party organisation, and his deep interest in political questions was well known in the Division. Whilst residing at Bacup, at the head of the Rossendale Valley, and

many years before the Liberal Club was started, he discharged, without fee or reward, the onerous duties of Liberal secretary for the District, and in that capacity he rendered yeoman service to the Liberal cause.

But in less tempestuous walks of life Mr. Thomas Newbigging has been eminently successful. He has for many years been widely known as an engineer of rare ability in his special branch of the profession, and as an author he has also a considerable reputation.

He was born in Glasgow, on the 30th of September, 1833, and is now, therefore, in his fifty-fourth year. His father, John Gibson Newbigging, was a Scotchman, and his mother half English and half Scotch, her father, Thomas Bayldon, being a Yorkshireman, and her mother, Euphemia Cockburn, a native of Edinburgh. Both his parents were born and brought up at New Lanark, where they were educated and trained at the schools of the celebrated Robert Owen, who is well known to have devoted a fortune and many years of his life in efforts to inaugurate "a new moral world." Like most of Owen's favourite pupils, however, they discarded his peculiar religious tenets, and joined the Free Kirk at Lanark. On their marriage his parents removed to Glasgow, his father, at that time in his twenty-first year, having obtained the appointment of manager of the extensive cotton mills of the Messrs. M'Phail, at Bridgeton and the Calton, Glasgow.

The subject of this sketch received his early education at the Bridgeton Public School, of which Mr. Gould was head master; and afterwards, on the family removing to Galloway, in the south of Scotland, at the Girthon School, Gatehouse-of-Fleet.

Here he was a schoolfellow and companion of the younger members of the Faed family: Susan, whose paintings are well known, and George, now deceased, who gave promise, as an artist, of rivalling his distinguished brothers. Will Nicholson, the Galloway poet, author of "The Brownie of Blednock," Mr. Newbigging well remembers as a frequent visitor at the house of his parents. The district around Gatehouse, including the entire Vale of Fleet, is one of the most beautiful and romantic in the south of Scotland. It is also hallowed by the memory of the venerable Samuel Rutherford, who ministered in the parish of Anworth, which adjoins Girthon, during the times of the Covenanters' persecution. The ivy-covered remains of his church are still in existence. The ruins of Cardoness and Rusco Castles are in the immediate neighbourhood, as also is Ravenshall, the scene

of Scott's "Guy Mannering," with Ellangowen, and Dirck Hatteraick's Cave. It was at Ardwell, the seat of the MacCulloch family, near Gatehouse, where Campbell wrote "The Beech Tree's Petition." The whole district, indeed, is one of the homes of poetry and romance, and sure to make its impress on the mind of an imaginative youth.

In 1844, his eleventh year, Thomas Newbigging went to Blackburn, Lancashire, where he lived till 1849. Thence he removed to Bury, and served as a mechanic in the large machine shops of Messrs. Walker and Hacking. In 1851 he took up his abode at Newchurch-in-Rossendale, and some years later removed to Bacup, in the same district.

The period of his residence in Rossendale was a very busy one in Mr. Newbigging's life. He soon became distinguished for his earnestness, conscientiousness, and ability, and before he was twenty-four years of age was marked as a rising man. He was offered and accepted the post of secretary and manager of the Rossendale Union Gas Company, remaining in this position for thirteen years. The company was in a state of chaos when he undertook its management, but, in conjunction with the late Captain Aitken, who was chairman of the company, he gradually worked it up to a satisfactory condition, and it eventually became one of the most successful and profitable gas undertakings in Lancashire. Very early during his residence at Bacup he became identified with the educational institutions in the town, and he was particularly associated with the Mechanics' Institution both as honorary secretary and director.

Mr. Newbigging was married in 1859 to Miss Lomax, youngest daughter of Mr. Abraham Lomax, of Sunnyside, Rossendale, and sister of the late Mr. John Lomax, of Cross Street, Manchester, an artist of repute, and has three sons and two daughters.

In the year 1870 Mr. Newbigging went out to Brazil as engineer and manager of the gas works at Pernambuco, belonging to Messrs. Fielden Bros. Here he resided five years, and, during his stay, was created by the Emperor of Brazil a Knight of the Order of the Rose, a distinction highly esteemed in that country. In 1875 he returned to Manchester and began practice as a civil and consulting engineer. During the Parliamentary session, however, he spends much of his time in London. As one of the leading authorities in the country on gas engineering, he is very often called as a professional witness before Committees of both Houses of Parliament on private bills relating to

gas supply. He is a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, of the Manchester Literary Club, and other learned societies. He is well known to all engaged in the gas industry as the author of "The Gas Manager's Handbook," which has reached a fourth edition, and as joint author and editor of "King's Treatise on the Manufacture and Distribution of Coal Gas," now accepted as the standard work on the subject. As an indication of the esteem in which he is held by his professional brethren, it may be mentioned that he was elected President of the Gas Institute for 1884-5, and presided over the Annual Meeting of the Institute held in Manchester in 1885.

Although Mr. Newbigging's professional life has thus been one of the busiest, he has from a very early age taken the keenest delight in literary pursuits. During his residence in Rossendale he published a volume of "Poems and Songs," the fruit of his leisure hours, and in conjunction with the late Mr. Henry Cunliffe—whose posthumous work, "Glossary of Rochdale-cum-Rossendale Words and Phrases," has recently appeared—and afterwards with his friend, Mr. J. H. Redman, now of the Middle Temple, author of "Arbitrations and Awards," and many other law treatises, wrote the leaders for the *Bacup Times*, besides contributing about two columns of matter to the same newspaper for several years without intermission. The only substantial advantage in all this labour lay in the training it gave him, and the reputation it brought, for it was gratuitous work, and done out of a love for literature. His "History of the Forest of Rossendale" was first written for this local paper. Afterwards published in book form it became widely known, and is now highly valued as one of the best of our local histories.

Four years ago a second edition of his "Poems and Songs" was issued. Many of these lyrics are written in the lissom Scotch dialect, and show a rare charm of fancy and a deep love of nature.

The following year he published a volume of "Sketches and Tales," which had a highly favourable reception. The three last-mentioned works are now out of print.

More recently, in conjunction with Mr. John Butterworth, of Manchester, Mr. Newbigging republished the psalm and hymn tunes of James Leach, a Lancashire composer of the last century, whose tunes are to this day well known and sung in the churches. Mr. Butterworth edited the musical portion of the volume, and Mr. Newbigging

contributed a sketch of Leach's life and an appreciative estimate of his genius. The quality of Mr. Newbigging's critical faculty is well exemplified in the paper on John Critchley Prince, included in the present volume, and which was read before the Manchester Literary Club.

When we consider that all this is the by-production of a very busy life, whose main current has flowed in so energetic and apparently so prosaic a course, we admire the more the flower-dotted banks, the grace of over-arching boughs, the wide stretches of sun-lit field on either side, and the suggestive strength of mountain outline beyond. The contents of the volume cannot fail to produce an impression of a many-sided mind, the prime characteristic of each facet being thoroughness—a mind of such broad sympathies, so masculine, so earnest, and so genial withal, that not to wish to know more of it must argue a certain sterility in one's own.

A word or two remains to be added. All the speeches and addresses embraced in this selection have had either a public or semi-public utterance, constituting, in the editor's opinion, a sufficient warrant for the conjunction, notwithstanding their varied character. The subject matter of the political speeches has a present-day interest, as it deals with questions which engross the attention of the politician, the journalist, the makers and the mere watchers of events. They bid fair, indeed, to remain the absorbing questions for some time to come.

March, 1887.

J. O. P.



POLITICAL SPEECHES.

GENERAL ELECTION, JULY, 1886.

Address to the Electors of the Rossendale Division of the County of Lancaster.

GENTLEMEN,—At the earnest call of the supporters of Mr. Gladstone's policy in your large and important Division of the County of Lancaster, I have consented to stand as a candidate for your suffrages in the forthcoming contest, in opposition to your late member, the Right Honourable the Marquis of Hartington, who now asks for a renewal of your confidence.

Nothing but an over-mastering sense of duty could have induced me to take this step.

We are grateful to his Lordship for his conduct in critical and anxious moments of his party, and we admire all that is noble and honourable in his career as a Liberal—we shall continue to esteem him for his many sterling and estimable qualities; but gratitude and esteem must not blind us to his deficiencies, nor must they at such a momentous time be allowed to over-ride the dictates of duty and conscience.

At this crisis in the history of our country, when the great principle of self-government in

Ireland which is advocated by Mr. Gladstone, our trusted leader, is confronted with the hostile resistance of implacable opponents, it behoves every earnest supporter of the policy of that leader to do all in his power to find opportunity for giving effect at the poll to his earnest convictions.

In order that such opportunity may be afforded, and that the Rossendale Division may not forfeit the high privilege and right of expressing its aspirations, I have consented at this late hour to step into the breach. This might have been more worthily, though not more honestly, filled.

Rossendale, as I have reason to know, is Liberal in the truest sense—namely, in the desire to do its share in widening the bounds of freedom, and in creating that true union of the peoples of this great Empire which in the unhappy instance of Ireland does not exist. I ought to have said “has not hitherto existed,” for the power of that sympathy, which has been evoked in presence of the measure of justice introduced by Mr. Gladstone’s Government, has already begun to work a beneficent change.

It is not necessary for me to enter into a detailed statement of my general political opinions. They are well known to most of you,

and I venture to say that the record will bear examination and even scrutiny.

If returned to Parliament as your representative, as I hope to be, I will give an earnest and intelligent support to Mr. Gladstone in his endeavours to establish a system of self-government in Ireland, compatible with the preservation of the unity of the Empire, and at the same time to remove the obstructions which block the way of other much-needed reforms.—I remain, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

THOMAS NEWBIGGING.

Manchester, 1st July, 1886.

SPEECH AT BACUP,

SATURDAY, JULY 3, 1886.

Delivered in the Co-operative Hall, Bacup.

Mr. Newbigging, who was received with loud and prolonged cheering, said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, and Electors of the Rossendale Division of the County of Lancaster,—I thank you sincerely for the reception which you have given me on this occasion, but I am not foolish enough, or conceited enough, to believe that the reception is personal to me

alone, except in so far as I represent a great cause and great principles.

Personal
explanations.

Let me preface the remarks I am about to address to you with a few words personal to myself. My candidature for this important division of Lancashire, and in opposition to my noble opponent, who has already represented you in Parliament, is not of my own seeking. It is only at your earnestly expressed request, and under a feeling of imperative duty, that I have consented, under obvious disadvantages, to take prominent action in your behalf. My habits of late years, whatever they may have been in earlier days, have not tended to make me hope that I should be able to influence opinion from a public platform. There comes a time, however, in the lives of most of us, when great events are marshalled before our eyes, when it is treason to shrink from self-sacrifice. That moment in my life I felt had arrived, and, responding to your earnest entreaty, in the midst of your difficulties I appear before you in this great crisis as the humble] exponent of your aspirations and your hopes.

The Irish
Question.

So much for myself; and now let me address you on the one question which overshadows all others, and on which the present appeal to the nation is based. Let me appeal to you, electors

SPEECH AT BACUP.

of Rossendale, whatever may be the complexion of your general political views on the great question which agitates the nation—let me appeal to you to consider it from a higher standpoint than that of mere party. This appeal does not come from me alone, or at first hand. It has been urged by the leaders on both sides, and is echoed daily from a thousand platforms. In the midst of our extended franchise the time has come to consider whether this feud which has existed between our peoples for so many weary years—years of blood and tears—shall be brought to an end, and a new era of hope and progress inaugurated in the sister island. The long series of repressive measures which have been employed by both parties in the State have not tended to produce the effect which was desired and hoped, and at one time believed they would produce. On the contrary, they have aggravated the disease of crime and disloyalty, and made it all but impossible for even a wise and generous statesmanship to heal the wounds that have been caused, and infuse new and healthful life into the nation's heart. It is not Ireland alone which suffers by the false policy that has been pursued. The progress of the whole nation is paralysed and arrested, for the iron has entered into its very soul. In the

Repressive
measures.

old days, in the medical art, it was the custom to blister and bleed the patient till scarce a pulse was left in the system to which these processes were applied. Wiser methods of cure now prevail; the doctor has flung his lancet and his ancient nostrums aside; he now studies the character of the disease he has to combat, and the patient for whom he is called in to prescribe; and by helping and encouraging nature to assist his efforts, the cure is not long delayed. Rest assured, the same methods will apply to the body politic, and, if pursued, the same speedy cure may be brought about. Instead of attempting to strangle and suppress the natural aspirations of Ireland for the government of its own home affairs, let these aspirations be encouraged and satisfied, and an abundant flood of life and brighter and happier days will dawn upon us all.

Repression and coercion.

I am aware that it is urged that repression and coercion are only applied to law-breakers, but the argument is a delusion by which either the simple or the despotic are blinded and ensnared. The argument, indeed, as you will see, carries its own refutation if you look the facts full in the face. Who will deny that repressive measures, such as have been applied to Ireland, have a stimulating effect upon crime and outrage?

That this is the bitter history of such measures in Ireland, sophistry can never refute. Their action is to weaken the respect for law and order, and to induce a spirit of contempt and retaliation against those who put them in force. I hold in my hand a small publication compiled by my friend Mr. H. J. Leech, of Manchester. It is named "The Irish Roll Call," and it should be in the hands of every intelligent student of affairs at the present time. It is a record of the special coercive measures that have been enforced in Ireland from the year 1685 down to the present time; and without going farther back than the year 1835, I find that in the fifty years that have elapsed, there are only two years that are not defaced by this special legislation. Is it not time, think you, that we turned over a new leaf, and asked ourselves whether there are not special causes and grievances at work which in their outcome have to be dealt with by this special and obnoxious and disastrous kind of legislation? The "double-dose-of-original-sin" theory may serve as a joke, and all wise men treat it as a joke, though some other men, by their action, prove themselves ready to believe and swallow it. Certainly they act as though they considered it true, and they cry aloud for a double dose of coercion to counteract it. But

"The Irish Roll
Call."

*Iniquitous
Land Laws.*

let us look below the black surface and see what it is that representative Irishmen have all these years been declaring to be the cause of, and the remedy for, this untoward state of things. There have been many causes at work. We see that iniquitous land laws have been at work, by which the sweat and labour of the cultivators of the soil have been deprived of their due and just reward. Some may be ready to tell me that the same or similar laws have been in operation in England, and that is true to a large extent, and we are looking forward to the inauguration of reforms in this direction nearer home, when our hands and our heads are less occupied than they are at present. But the general character of Ireland in regard to its natural wealth and advantages is less favourable than that of England and Scotland, and a bad law presses with double force upon the people there than in the other sections of the United Kingdom. Ireland possesses but comparatively little of that almost inexhaustible mineral wealth which has contributed almost beyond computation to the prosperity of the other portions of the kingdom. We boast of our equal laws, and are ready sometimes, in face of Irish discontent, to cry out, "Why cannot these people be satisfied? These malcontents live under equal laws with our-

selves." It is a hideous mistake to argue thus. These equal laws, when the circumstances are unequal, are one of the egregious errors into which we have fallen in our legislation. It is one of the great blemishes of the laws that they are equal as applied both to England and Ireland. There is no right or sanction that they should possess this boasted equality. What is wanted is an intelligent and beneficent inequality in the laws, that their final outcome and effect may be to produce equal and general happiness and prosperity. Such being the case, I say, let us cast aside this wretched subterfuge of equal laws, which is hawked about and bandied from mouth to mouth as though it were the justification, and, in fact, is used and quoted as the justification, for an untold series of British misdeeds towards Ireland.

Now, all or most of the mistakes that are made in the government of Ireland are the result of ignorance on the part of the legislature. The members of this legislature have persisted year after year, and generation after generation, no doubt with the very best intentions, but with a strange neglect of Irish opinion, to enact laws apparently equal in their incidence, but in reality oppressive and obnoxious to a portion of the kingdom. The remedy for all this is surely as

Home Rule.

clear as noonday, and it is this: let the Irish people manage their own affairs. They know best their needs and their requirements. They see the faults of the legislation to which they have been subjected by a well-meaning but misguided interference, and they are best able to apply the remedy and reverse our failures. But more than this: their patriotic aspirations require to be satisfied. They claim the right to make and administer their own home laws. Had all the legislation of the past been as wise and beneficent as much of it has been hurtful and inapplicable to the circumstances, Irishmen would still have spurned the soft impeachment that others than themselves had the right to make their home laws? I am here to-night to deny that any people or section of the people have the inherent right to make such home laws for others. And I say that the Irishman is a poltroon who will cease to agitate until his claim of Home Rule has been recognised and allowed. There must be no peddling and paltering with this great question in the future as has been in the past. The people must rise to the height of the great argument of their revered and noble leader. They must put themselves in the place of their Irish brethren, and declare that nothing short of their just demands will satisfy them, and that

whether a Tory Government or a Liberal Government holds the reins of power this sacred demand shall be accorded.

“Twenty years of coercion!” Don’t believe it, gentlemen! Neither Lord Salisbury nor all his hosts will ever again be able to enforce coercion for a single year. They will never attempt it. Coercion is as dead as the leaves that flaunted on the trees of last year, and not all the breath of titled arrogance can ever revive it. The instincts of a generous people will frustrate any attempt of the kind.

“Twenty years of coercion.”

No Liberal can mention the name of Mr. Bright but with respect for his character, and with admiration for his great abilities. Most of you will have read the powerful speech—powerful in many respects—he delivered to his constituents on Thursday last. But surely his treatment of the Irish question on that occasion was unworthy of his name and of his fame. This question which has taxed the ingenuity of the highest human wit—which has destroyed Governments, and convulsed society, is all in a nutshell to him! He cracks it, and behold the kernel which you have been vainly seeking for all these years. It is a mere question of conjuring. “That’s how it is done, gentlemen,” says the great conjuror. Is it reasonable? Is it fair? Is

Mr. Bright.

it logical? In a word, is it like honest John Bright? No. But don't imagine, ladies and gentlemen, that though this oracle has spoken—the oracle who has, up to now, on this question, been as mute as the sphinx—and who, at the right moment has dealt, as some people think, a knock-down blow against Home Rule—don't imagine that you have found the solution. I tell you that this treatment of the Irish difficulty is unworthy of the man. Mr. Bright is good at giving advice, and he gives it in a complacent way which must be tantalising to his confreres in the State; but I have observed also that he is not over fond of assuming and bearing the burden of the responsibility of office. Let him take office—he has the opportunity whenever he chooses—and show us how he will deal with this question of Ireland. An *obiter dictum* is all very well as a random shot, but it does not go down to the root of the difficulty.

Lord
Hartington's
views.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, and electors of Rossendale, what contribution does Lord Hartington propose towards the solution of this question of the hour? ("None."). I read his speeches with admiration and with sorrow. In much of them there breathes the spirit of true Liberalism and trust, and the nobility of his nature vibrates in a hundred passages. But on

this great Irish question, which overshadows and dwarfs all other questions, he is where the ruck of us were some dozen years ago. The views of his Rossendale constituents are far in advance of those of their representative. This is a sorrowful plight for both sides, and I can well understand the overpowering desire that consumes you to express your agreement with, and your faith in, our great leader. I would that you could assist your late representative to a speedy conversion.

To Irishmen I speak my final word: Let them be patient. Let no crime hinder the consummation of their hopes. In the face of misrepresentation, insult, and obloquy, let them continue to exhibit forbearance and trust, for depend upon it, the day of their redemption draweth nigh.

A word to
Irishmen.

SPEECH AT HASLINGDEN,

MONDAY, JULY 5TH, 1886.

Delivered in the Public Hall, Haslingden.

Mr. Newbigging, who was met with loud and prolonged cheering, said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, and Electors of the Rossendale Division of Lancashire,—I thank you for the enthusiastic reception which you have given

me on this occasion, and I look upon it as an augury of success. It is a very great pleasure to me to appear before a Haslingden audience for the purpose of justifying my present action, and of addressing you on the great question that agitates the country. Perhaps I am not so well known here, personally, as I am in some other parts of this important division. So far as my political views are concerned, however, I will endeavour, with your forbearance, to remedy that deficiency on this occasion. But whether well known amongst you or not, I have good credentials to lay before you in the cause of Liberalism which I advocate, and in the name of Mr. Gladstone, the great leader whom I am proud to follow.

The elections.

We learn from the returns which appear in the newspapers to-day that, so far, the completed elections give the advantage to our opponents. To me these results afford all the stronger reason for us to redouble our exertions and act our part with increased courage and determination. The final result, I have every confidence in believing, will be to change the face of the situation in a very remarkable degree. But even if it should be otherwise, it will not shake our faith and belief in the ultimate triumph of our cause.

I have had the right, or the privilege as some The privilege voting. would rather say, of exercising my vote at elections during a considerable number of years; but on no previous occasion have I felt more pride and satisfaction in exercising that privilege than at the present crisis in our country's history. This pride and satisfaction arise from the feeling which overpowers me—that now the time has come when I can do my share in helping to remedy the miseries of long weary years, and in restoring peace, and, as I firmly believe, eventual prosperity, to a distracted country. Surely it is well that we should learn wisdom from observation and experience. And yet there are those who in treating this question of Ireland, which overshadows all others, and which will continue to haunt and encumber us till a final settlement is obtained—I say there are those who would still cling to the old and obsolete methods of a hundred-times-proved failure and disaster. Gentlemen, our great leader, in eloquent words, has called upon us to be wise in time. They are significant and earnest words of warning to which it is well we should give heed. Depend upon it, this question can never be shelved or put aside until a satisfactory solution has been arrived at. It bars the way of all other much-needed legislation, and

The Irish Question.

will continue to bar the way. I care not what party assumes the reins of government—whether Tory, Coalition, or Radical—this “old man of the sea” will assert itself with increasing weight, and burden our legislators. Well, gentlemen, are the resources of civilisation exhausted? Surely not, and Mr. Gladstone has made good his words that they are not exhausted, and has shown us a way, and, as I believe, the only practicable way, over the hill of difficulty. That way is to grant a generous measure of Home Government to our Irish brethren. But beware of the policy of reaction that is being preached. The press of a country, especially of a free country, is a potent engine for both good and evil. Taking it in the bulk I don’t think it has presented an exhibition of wisdom in recent months. There are some conspicuous exceptions, and we in Manchester have reason to be proud of our press. But the destructive criticism that is poured forth day by day over the country is not calculated to advance either moral or political progress. There is one comfort in the midst of it all to which we can anchor ourselves as to a rock. Its advocacy of wrong is never finally successful; whereas its advocacy of justice is irresistible in the end.

The Press.

jected to Mr. Gladstone’s measure that

its effect, if adopted, would be to destroy the unity of the Empire. Any denial of mine to such a false conclusion will carry but little weight to those who, in the face of the most obvious facts, are determined to hold such a mistaken view. I do deny it, however, most strenuously, and I say further that I would lend no countenance to any measure which I considered would produce that result. But let us look the facts full in the face. The principle of Mr. Gladstone's measure was the right to Ireland of self-government, the government of its purely domestic affairs. The proposed domestic Legislature could not make laws affecting the Crown. It had not the making of peace or war, nor the establishment of an army, navy, militia, or volunteers. It had no power of interference with foreign affairs, or with trade, navigation, or the postal service, except the transmission of letters and telegrams in Ireland. It was prohibited from coining money, nor could it make a legal tender which was not sanctioned by the Imperial Parliament. Thus even domestic legislation itself was limited and bounded, unnecessarily, in my opinion. Where, I ask, is the disturbance to Imperial unity in such a measure? ("There is none.") True the Irish members were to be excluded from the Imperial Parliament, but on that head

Imperial unity.

The Home Rule
Bill.

The Irish leader.

National
aspirations.

Mr. Gladstone and his Government were open to accept the utmost modification that could be shown to be practicable and desirable. The Irish leader has expressed his satisfaction with the measure in unequivocal terms, and will accept it as a final settlement. Now it is very easy to carp and sneer at this statement, and say, "Yes, it's all very well, but you cannot satisfy these people, they will only make the granting of Home Rule the stepping-stone to absolute separation." I do not share that belief. My common sense revolts from it. I tell you it is a mistake. Satisfy this national aspiration of a brave and generous and warm-hearted people, and you will heap coals of fire upon their heads. And whilst managing their home affairs they will only be too proud to maintain their connection with the Empire towards the greatness and glory of which they have contributed their full share. Language such as this is treated with derision by most of our Tory opponents, when it suits their purpose, and even by some of our so-called Unionist Liberal friends. But I would rather cherish a trustful belief in what is good in human nature, even when it is Irish human nature, and when it accords with reason and common sense, than harbour feelings which are cold and calculating and resentful and unjust,

and which have engendered a crop of bitterness and strife, the ripe fruits of which we have seen in the recent history of Ireland.

Reverencing as I do the name of Mr. Bright, whose services to the people are almost beyond the power of any of us to estimate, I cannot but feel pained at the attitude he has now assumed towards this burning question. He offers us no worthy solution of the difficulty: on the contrary, I distinctly say that his references to the subject are unworthy of the man and his fame. It is a mere question of a committee, says Mr. Bright; as though the world had not been moving since he discussed the subject a few years ago with Mr. Sullivan. If his plan of a committee was not acceptable a few years ago, how can he hope for its acceptance now? The proposal is like reading a memorandum in "Mr. Pepy's Diary," it is so out of date and antiquated. Does Mr. Bright think that a committee will satisfy the national aspirations of Ireland? These he takes no account of. He entirely ignores them. His plan is like the play of "Hamlet" with the part of Hamlet left out. No, it is mere trifling to talk of this as a solution of the difficulty. The suggestion might have come appropriately from some politician of the Ashmead-Bartlett stamp. Mr. Bright did not

Mr. Bright's
attitude.

Pepy's Diary

nibble at the Corn Laws in this peddling kind of way; but, after all, that was perhaps more a question of arithmetic than mere statesmanship. I tell you again, it is unworthy of the man. But let me quote Mr. Bright's own utterances on this very subject in the year 1868. In a speech at Liverpool, in the month of June of that year, he said: "I have never said that Irishmen are not at liberty to ask for, and, if they could accomplish it, to obtain, the repeal of the Union. I say that we have no right whatever to insist upon a union between Ireland and Great Britain upon our terms only." Again, in a speech at Limerick, in July of the same year, he said: "There are those among us who disbelieve in any permanent reconciliation with Great Britain, who think that the only true and lasting remedy for Irish discontent is to be found either in the repeal of the Act of Union, or in absolute independence. . . . I am one of those who admit—as every sensible man must admit—that an Act which the Parliament of the United Kingdom has passed the Parliament of the United Kingdom can repeal. And further, I am willing to admit that everybody in England allows with regard to every foreign country that any nation believing it to be its interest has a right both to ask for and strive for national

Mr. Bright's
views in 1868.

independence. My purpose in legislating with regard to the land will be gradually, but I hope also rapidly, to restore to the population of Ireland, to the skilled farmers, or to those among them who save money—to restore to them a proprietary right in the soil of the country. There also comes to my aid a feeling which I have had ever since I entered the political field—a deep and abiding faith in justice. I believe that justice may be called, of all things, the miracle-worker amongst men. I believe that all men are to be reached by it, and all bodies of men—the inhabitants of provinces as of nations; and there is nothing I believe more firmly than this—that if there be a people on the face of the earth whose hearts are accessible to justice it is the Irish people. There can be no great measure accomplished unless all concerned lend willing hands; and there can be no great act of national and historical reconciliation unless all the parties hitherto opposed are willing to be reconciled. Let us make a new treaty—not written on parchment, not bound with an oath. Its conditions shall be these: Justice on the part of Great Britain; forgiveness on the part of Ireland. It shall be written in the hearts of the three nations; and we will pray to Him who is the common Father

Mr. Bright's
views in 1868.

of all people, and in whose hands are the destinies of all States, that He will make it last for ever and for ever inviolate." These are noble and statesmanlike words. How can Mr. Bright reconcile them with his present attitude and his latest utterances? Were they only spoken in jest? If so, they were cruel words. But whether in jest or in earnest, there they stand in condemnation of the latest Birmingham speech.

Now, you are business men in the Rossendale Division; I know of none better in Lancashire, or beyond it. When you hear of murmurs of complaint from the hands in any of your mills—and sometimes they have just cause of complaint—and an outsider comes and says to you, "Never mind the complaints; there is no just cause for them; your hands are a pack of wastrels," it is probable you would look at him, and say in reply, "Well, it may be true what you say, but I will send for the manager—the man on the spot—and get *his* report." Well, the man on the spot comes, and when questioned he admits that there is ground for dissatisfaction; the work is bad, owing to bad cotton having been purchased, or from some other cause; and so the proper remedy is applied. Well, in the case of Ireland, we have taken the opinion of

The man on the spot.

men on the spot—four Viceroy, Lords Kimberley, Spencer, Carnarvon, and Aberdeen, and about as many Chief Secretaries—and they tell us, both Tory and Liberal Viceroy, that nothing but Home Rule will satisfy and pacify Ireland; and furthermore, if they might follow the dictates of their own consciences, Home Rule should be granted. Now, I will back the opinion of Lords Spencer and Carnarvon—both good men on the spot—against a whole Parliament of wiseacres who, many of them, have probably never planted a foot on the soil of Ireland.

We frequently hear it said that an Englishman going and taking up his abode in Ireland, and residing in that country for a number of years, becomes in time more Irish even than the Irish themselves. The reason is obvious. To a fair-minded man the disabilities under which Ireland suffers in regard to her natural resources, as compared with England, and in regard to many of her laws, which have been enacted by legislators unacquainted with her condition and needs, is sufficient to account for the paradox. I beg of you, electors, if any of you are being deluded with the idea which is being drummed into your ears that this question can be shelved without a settlement for some length of time, or that any settlement short of Home Rule can be

“More Irish than the Irish.”

Michael Davitt.

made to suffice—I warn you that you are living in a fool's paradise. You know Michael Davitt. He was reared in your midst; in this very town he grew from youth to manhood. I think he must have imbibed many of his ideas of freedom in breathing the air of the Rossendale hills. I knew him when he was a youth, going in and out along your streets. He is a man of unblemished character, and his nobility of soul is ungrudgingly recognised both by friends and opponents; whilst modest and unassuming, he is as brave as a lion. He is the Nelson—the Lord Nelson of the Irish party. There are many more as patriotic as he over there in the sister island. Do you think they will ever be satisfied with anything short of Home Rule? (“No.”) I tell you they will not. Mr. Davitt contemplates the possibility of Mr. Gladstone's defeat, and in his speech delivered in Manchester last week, he said that, “Even if Mr. Gladstone should be defeated by the present unholy combination, he has already by his action endeared himself to the Irish heart, and will live enshrined there as long as the Irish people are susceptible of gratitude. Moreover, he has brought about a real union between the democracies—a union that will last until Home Rule is won, and until measures for the benefit of the

masses are recorded upon the statute book of the realm." I echo that tribute to our leader, and I ask you, electors of this Rossendale Division, to do your part in hastening the successful completion of this the greatest work he has yet taken in hand.

SPEECH AT RAWTENSTALL,

TUESDAY, JULY 6, 1886.

Delivered in the Co-operative Hall, Rawtenstall.

Mr. Newbigging, who had a most cordial reception, said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, and Electors of the Rossendale Division of Lancashire,—The occasion which has brought us together is of paramount importance to us all. If we are earnest politicians and good citizens, as I take it for granted we are, whether Liberal or Conservative, we must be profoundly impressed in contemplating the momentous issues which must eventually arise either from a change in the policy of governing Ireland, or of attempting to continue the old mistaken policy which has been pursued. I put it on the very lowest grounds of expediency when I say that this Irish question needs settling and getting out of the way, so that we may

The Irish
Question.

Free Trade in
Land.

turn our attention to much that requires to be improved in our own domestic affairs. We have a land question of our own that needs discussion and consideration. We need reform in the settlement of land, and in the circumstances under which land can be dealt in. Its sale and purchase and transfer need to be simplified and made less costly. In a word, we stand greatly in need of Free Trade in land. Nothing, in my opinion, since the repeal of the Corn Laws, would give a greater stimulus to agriculture and the general trade of the country than the adoption of this much-needed land reform. Trade has been bad enough in Rossendale, in all conscience, for many years now, and it may be hard for some of us to see how reforms of the kind which I have mentioned could improve it. But the passing of good laws has a wide-reaching effect in stimulating enterprise, in causing the circulation of money, and in improving the condition of the people in every part of the empire. Then there is the question of county government. The administration of our local county affairs is unnecessarily expensive, as well as unsatisfactory, by reason of divided authority, and a multiplicity of official work that needs fusing together under one compact management, in the appointment of which managing or controlling body

every householder should have a voice. There are other important questions that press for attention, but this distracting question of Ireland blocks the way, and will continue to block the way, I care not what Government may be in power, until it is settled to the satisfaction of those most concerned. I believe that it will be settled, and that before long. Possibly there may be yet another dissolution of Parliament before it is accomplished, but the question is almost ripe for plucking.

Ireland blocks
the way.

I could have hoped that a united Liberal party would have grappled with this Irish difficulty in a manful and generous spirit, now. They had a grand opportunity which they are in danger of losing. The Conservatives will do it, depend upon that, whenever they have a fair chance, or as soon as they find themselves pinned against the wall. They scout the notion at present, most of them, but I have no faith in Tory professions. The political history of the party is not one that commends itself to my approval or respect. Lord Salisbury is brave in words, but weak in action when under responsibility. I pass by all his lieutenants as being scarcely worthy of mention as having minds of their own, except one. Lord Randolph Churchill is intensely Radical in his instincts.

Lord Salisbury

Lord Randolph
Churchill

Moreover, he is clever, and audacious, and unscrupulous, and he is a power in his party; and he would not hesitate to dish his present Unionist friends to-morrow if by that means he could grasp the reins of power, improve the Tory prospects, and secure a lengthy lease of office. Remember, he has an unshaken belief—and the confession is his own—that Elijah's mantle has fallen upon him, and remember also that these were the kind of tactics that the great Elijah himself pursued. Lord Hartington is too honest, politically, to be seen in company with such men. He is like the young man from the country, and has got into the hands of political sharpers. They will play the "confidence trick" upon him, as sure as fate, and he will be left in the lurch. Perhaps, after all, it may do him and those Liberals who share his views a world of good in the end. They will learn wisdom by bitter experience, and then, like prodigal sons, they will return to the paternal home. Sweet are the uses of adversity. But just think what sorrowful memories will be theirs ever afterwards!

The confidence
trick.

Well, gentlemen, electors of Rossendale, close up your ranks. Let steady be the word! This is not a time for any one of us to rest on his oars. The enemy is vigilant and strong, and we must

not despise him. He must be taken in flank and rear. I dispute the wisdom of the policy which at one time seemed likely to operate here of allowing a Dissident candidate to take his seat scot free at such a crisis as the present. And if there is one constituency more than another that should be consulted as to who should represent their views and their wishes, that constituency is Rossendale. Every man has a right to his opinion, and he is bound to act upon it if he is honest. Lord Hartington is not to be blamed for his present attitude. But that is not the question. The question is, does he reflect the views, is he a true exponent of the wishes, of a majority of those whom he aspires to represent in the Commons' House of Parliament? I have received ample assurance that he is not, or I should have been very sorry to be seen here to-day in opposition to him. It is monstrous that you should have been expected to disfranchise yourselves for the sake of providing a safe seat for his lordship. I have a higher opinion of the people of Rossendale than to think they could be so subservient and foolish. It is like asking a man to sell his birthright without even the poor compensation for it of the historic mess of pottage. It is as if you had asked the Liberal Council for bread and

Lord
Hartington's
attitude.

Lord
Hartington's
movements.

they had given you a stone. The noble Marquis has been galavanting about the country for the last month, striving his level best to play into the hands of your political enemies the Tories. Now, I think, considering that many of his constituents here were willing to return him unopposed—even many of those who dissent from his views—he might have exercised a little forbearance in the direction of not hurting their feelings—in not being so persistent in returning evil for good. His movements have been quite meteoric and wonderful. I cannot say, however, that they have been accompanied by many scintillations of light. His policy, if he has one at all, and if he has he has not formulated it with any distinctiveness, is a kind of negative or agnostic policy in regard to Ireland. That, at least, is all I can gather from his deliverances on the question. True, in his speech delivered at Crawshawbooth last night, he expresses himself as being in favour of fairly considering the granting of a greater amount of self-government to Ireland, within limits essential to the safety of the Empire. But this is precisely the policy of Mr. Gladstone, call it Home Rule, or Self-government, or what you like; and what consistency is there in pursuing a fiery crusade through the country, in the interest, to a large

extent, of our Conservative opponents, who, if they were able, would suppress and strangle this aspiration for self-government? And what has been your position here? All the time your late member has been pursuing this crusade against his great leader, and our leader, we have been advised to sit still up in these free valleys and twirl our thumbs whilst trying to suppress the emotions that are calling for utterance within us. I say it was bad advice to give and to accept. It was asking you to do evil, with only a very vague prospect that good might come. But you have not all bowed the knee to Baal. I believe, indeed, that very few of you have. I well knew in my inmost soul that Mr. Henry Maden, the renowned leader of Rossendale Liberalism, was not to be classed in that category, and his brave example will have an influence that will tend to victory. A member whose opinions are actively opposed to their views may suit some benighted individuals or constituencies, but he will not do for a Rossendale constituency, even in times of calm and quiet—not to mention a time like the present, when the heart of the country is stirred to its very depths. I fully realise the responsibility devolving upon me at this crisis. You, I sincerely believe, feel equal or greater responsibility

Rossendale
Liberalism.

Mr. Gladstone.

in calling upon me to come forward and do battle on your behalf. It is earnestly to be desired that my noble opponent, who is the moving spirit of the opposing hosts throughout the country, should be overthrown. Further, let us each and all have a hand in putting the crown upon the old age of our great leader, Mr. Gladstone. It will probably be the last good turn we shall have the opportunity of doing him in acknowledgment of what he has done for freedom during his long and arduous life, and Rossendale, I am convinced, will do this to her eternal honour.

SPEECH AT CRAWSHAWBOOTH,

WEDNESDAY, JULY 7TH, 1886.

Delivered in the Assembly Room, Crawshawbooth.

Disorder
deprecated.

Mr. Newbigging, who was very warmly received, said: I was pained this morning, on taking up my newspaper, to find that some interruption and disorder prevailed in the earlier part of Lord Hartington's meeting at Bacup last night. Let me earnestly deprecate the occurrence of anything of that kind at any future meeting of my right honourable opponent. We have no need to call in the assistance of clamour and

disturbance to aid us in the great work to which we have set our hand. We are willing to rest our case on the basis of reason and argument, for we believe it to be invulnerable to every assault. The citadel which we are defending can never be stormed, because it is garrisoned on its four sides by justice, mercy, reason, and truth. Therefore, strike, but hear! And now a word to our opponents. Let them also avoid anything like sneering and recrimination. A good deal of that has been practised, and irritating words have been used—not so much by our Conservative opponents as by those Liberals who have arrogated to themselves the name of “Unionist”—to which name they have no just claim or title beyond what we can claim as supporters of Mr. Gladstone’s policy. I observed that Mr. Brooks, in his opening remarks at Lord Hartington’s meeting at Crawshawbooth, on Monday evening, spoke in a somewhat querulous manner of my having come as a candidate before the division, contrary to the express resolution passed by a majority of the Liberal Council. Now, it is true that I have not been selected by the Council to contest the division, but neither has my right honourable opponent. He is no less an independent candidate than I am, and I am no more an independent candidate than he. No doubt he

Sneering and
recrimination
deprecated.

Personal
explanations.

is now supported by a part of the Council, but so am I; and, further than that, I have the countenance and support of the leader of Rossendale Liberalism, Mr. Henry Maden, with the host of workers that know so well how to achieve victory. But, as I have already explained, this contest is not of my own seeking. I have come forward at the earnest call of the loyal supporters of Mr. Gladstone, who, I believe, will prove themselves to be by far the majority in the division. It is gratuitous, therefore, in any one to find fault with my action on this occasion; and it is wrong, and is an unjustifiable assumption of superiority in any one to write letters to me, as has been done, charging me with trying to disturb the peace and break the unity of the Liberal party in Rossendale. The fact is, that peace and unity were broken before I appeared on the scene, and, indeed, my appearance is due to the very circumstance that they had been already broken. I am in hopes that my candidature will go far towards cementing the divisions. But was it not a monstrous thing that at such a crisis as the present, and with such great issues at stake—was it not a monstrous thing that the majority in a Liberal Council should expect you electors to disenfranchise yourselves, allowing a safe and uncontested seat to Lord Hart-

Action of the
Liberal Council.

ington, who is the moving spirit in the opposition to the policy of Mr. Gladstone? To those who blame my action I reply in the words of Elijah as addressed to Ahab: "And Ahab said to Elijah, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house." It is like crying, "Peace, peace!" when there is no peace. If this is the kind of peace that the majority of a Liberal Council can recommend at a time like the present, then I say, "I bring not peace but a sword."

Elijah to Ahab.

Liberalism, to be true to itself, must be aggressive. It must take a living interest in the great events of the hour, and help to mould the better life of the nation. The present is essentially a soldiers' battle as Mr. Gladstone has pointed out; and every soldier must feel and work as though victory depended on his own single efforts. Now, whatever may be the multitude of words that are employed to obscure the ultimate effect of the present action of your late member, he is—though to a large extent, as I believe, unconsciously to himself—the embodiment of an attempt to prolong and continue that wretched policy which has been pursued in regard to Ireland. He is the point round which all the forces of reaction crystallise and coalesce.

Liberalism
aggressive.

Lord
Hartington's
action.

Ireland and the
method of
government.

He is the one strongest living and acting politician who is determined that Ireland shall continue to be governed according to English ideas. He is willing, it is quite true, to grant this amelioration, and the other concession to Ireland, but it must be from the point of view of the Marquis of Hartington, and not from that of the great bulk of the people of Ireland themselves. In a word, he is determined to ignore and to stifle, if he can, the national aspirations of the Irish people. I do not say that he is anxious to do this by a return to the old coercive and repressive measures. On the contrary, I believe that his nature revolts from that idea. I gather from his speeches that he would try blander and softer methods for the attainment of his purpose. He would smother Desdemona with a pillow. He would make this concession, and the other concession, in the hope that they would be persuaded and pacified. He would feed and flatter them into submission—submission to continue to be governed not according to their own ideas but according to his. My professional avocations have occasionally taken me across to Limerick in the West, and to Coleraine in the North. I have been at both places when agitation was rampant, and looking at the long, gaunt, earnest Celtic faces that I have come

Smothering
Desdemona.

General
observations on
Ireland.

across in my journeys, I have long since come to the conclusion that no pabulum which you can devise short of Home Government will ever suffice to feed and satisfy them. You may attempt in a grandmotherly way to make them as comfortable as eider-down, and as sleek as butter, but the national grievance will remain. Man does not live by bread alone. Whether my noble opponent sees these facts at present or not, he will see them before long. The light will break in upon him, and upon those who follow him, and upon those who, sincerely anxious to act rightly and justly, are halting between two opinions, unable to make up their minds.

Grandmotherly
Government.

It is amusing as well as bewildering to observe the flight hitherward of all the leaders of the rebel camp bent on crushing an insignificant person like me. What a pity it is that Lord Randolph has gone to Norway at such a juncture! His fine, flippant, jocose style would have been a fitting set off to the stolid heaviness of Sir Henry James. You will do well to remember that Lord Randolph once cried out in appealing accents to the Marquis: "Come over and help us." And now that the appeal has been responded to, he could scarcely have refused his help in return. It is even announced that Mr. Chamberlain is coming to the rescue—Mr.

The flight of
leaders
hitherward.

Mr. Chamberlain
to the rescue.

Mr.
Chamberlain's
attitude.

Chamberlain, who is injuring his great fame by appeals to the lowest passions of his hearers, striving to inflame and perpetuate the bitter prejudices of class and race; trying to make the working men of our towns and the labourers in our agricultural counties believe that the effect of Mr. Gladstone's measure will be to flood this country with Irish labour, and terrorising also weak minds with the bogie of religious persecution, in this nineteenth century. This is base work for one to be engaged in doing—one who was once our hope and pride. But do not make any mistake, electors of Rossendale. It is not to overwhelm me that they are putting forth these gigantic efforts. It is an attempt to stab Mr. Gladstone in the back. It is to save the Marquis that they come, and, in saving him, to save themselves; and in order that, if by any means they can achieve a victory, they may be able to say to the country—"See, the policy of Lord Hartington is endorsed and approved by his Rossendale constituents." I hope you will be true to yourselves and to your principles in this struggle. This leader must be vanquished, as his lieutenant—or perhaps I should say his instigator—Mr. Goschen, has been vanquished in Edinburgh. However other constituencies may fail to rise to the height of this great argument,

Mr. Goschen
defeated.

I believe that Rossendale at least will be true to the principles and convictions that have hitherto guided her steps. Mr. John Bright is good at striking a blow, and he calculates his time to a nicety. The blow he struck by his speech on Thursday last was a blow struck at human progress, and it will recoil upon himself. And as to the paltry scheme which he propounds for the settlement of the Irish difficulty—and which, by the way, has not even the merit of originality—you might as well administer a pill to cure an earthquake.

Mr. Bright.

My honourable opponent, as well as Mr. Chamberlain and most of the speakers on their side, hammer away with great pertinacity at the Land Purchase Bill, notwithstanding the assurance given by Mr. Gladstone that this Bill is not only withdrawn but dead. But it suits their purpose in the meantime. An appeal to the heads of some men through their pockets is irresistible. No one in supporting the principle of home government is committed to the provisions of that Bill, and if it should be revived in the future in any shape or form whatever, it will have to undergo scrutiny and criticism, and will be rejected if it is proved to be objectionable. Now, I was never greatly enamoured of the Purchase Bill, and am, therefore, not sorry that

The Land
Purchase Bill.

The Irish
Landlords and
the Bill.

it is out of the way ; not that it was a bad Bill or an unsafe Bill. I do not share the view that was taken by many, that there was any risk that might be called serious, of saddling the people of this country with the debt which would be created in buying out the landlords. The security, in my opinion, was as absolute as any security in this world. And I perfectly agree with Mr. Gladstone that it would not have entailed one penny of burden on the British taxpayer. Although its terms leaned in generosity to the side of the landlords, yet it was by no means received with acceptance by that body, but rather was treated with cold indifference. This to me is a very significant circumstance. Why did they not hasten with avidity to accept it? It is evident that the impending enactment of Home Rule has not the terrors for them that many in this country expected it would have. I believe that, as a rule, they would prefer to retain possession of their land, and run all the risks of confiscation by an Irish National Parliament. And what does this imply, but that they do not consider the risks to be anything like as great as some noisy and interested politicians on this side the water would have us believe. I am inclined rather to take this view, that if there had been a rush of the landlords to

support Mr. Gladstone's Purchase Bill—an avidity to grasp the generous terms he proposed, it would have been a strong argument as against the granting of Home Rule itself. It would have proved that deep mistrust and anxiety prevailed, just as their action has shown all unprejudiced observers that a great deal of that much-talked-of mistrust is mythical and untrue. So far, then, as I am able to judge, I do not think there would be any objection to dropping the idea of purchase altogether, and allowing the question of the land to be dealt with by the proposed Irish Legislature. Mr. Chamberlain, I see, with dogged persistence, sticks to 150 or 250 millions as being the sum which he asserts was proposed under the Land Bill. You will remember, in contrast to this, that Mr. Gladstone estimated the amount at 50 millions, and I would be prepared to back Mr. Gladstone in preference to Mr. Chamberlain on a matter of that kind. But whatever the amount, it should not be forgotten that since the Act of Union a sum almost equal to the largest of those named has been spent by this country in the struggle to keep down or crush out the patriotic aspirations of the Irish people, and without one farthing of benefit to show for it in return. This money has not, however, been squandered by the people of this

Cost of
repression.

Useless
expenditure.

country. They have had little or no voice in the matter. It is only of recent years that they have been considered worthy to have any choice in the appointment of those who spend their money. It is privilege and exclusiveness that have kept Ireland in the dust, and saddled us with this huge and useless, and worse than useless, expenditure. It is a big price to pay for the burden of trouble and sorrow that now encumbers us! If I mistake not, it costs us three millions a year at the present time to maintain a footing in Ireland on our own wretched terms. Capitalise these three millions at 3 per cent, and you have 100 millions as the amount which we are now paying, and which we are committed to pay, for the attempt to perpetuate injustice. And yet Mr. Chamberlain, who I am told is coming down to enlighten you, has the audacity to prate about the enormity of the guilt of Mr. Gladstone in proposing that we should lend 50 millions for a good and wise and beneficent object, on as full and ample a security as could be devised—the security of a brave and satisfied people, whose trust and affection we had won by doing them justice.

I ask my honourable opponent if there is not something like sweet reasonableness in what I am now saying. It ill befits him either to don

the fool's cap or to play the scorner. Let him leave that to meaner souls, to those who have a paltry ambition to serve, and are never likely to rise to the position to which he is assuredly destined to attain, namely, that of a great English statesman. But in the meantime to rescue you, Rossendale electors, from the degradation of consenting to the return of a representative who, at present at least, misrepresents your views, I have come to the rescue. See that you act worthy of the opportunity and of the occasion.

Sweet reasonableness.

SPEECH AT STACKSTEADS,

THURSDAY, JULY 8TH, 1886.

*Delivered in the Waterbarn British School,
Stacksteads.*

Mr. Newbigging on rising to address the meeting, was received with great enthusiasm. He said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, and Electors of the Rossendale Division of Lancashire,—I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the kind and enthusiastic reception which you have given me on this occasion. I take it as an expression of your sympathy with the cause I have at heart, and I hope and believe that it is a presage

Lord Hartington
and his followers

The Tories.

Ultra Whigs.

of victory. My candidature for this important division, as you are aware, is not of my own seeking. It is only at your earnest entreaty that I have consented as a matter of duty to take prominent action on your behalf. If it were only a question of mere personal preference, I should have been on the side of Lord Hartington, instead of being engaged in this battle against him. But the question, as it presents itself to me, is of a far different complexion to that of personal regard. For the moment the noble Marquis is the embodiment of principles which I hold in detestation and abhorrence. There is clustered around him the whole reactionary army, which Liberalism, when it is true to itself, must always be prepared to fight. The Tories almost to a man are at his back. They are in the right place. In that one sense, and in that sense only, the Tories are always right—that is, when they are supporting an obstructionist or reactionary policy. Our friends, therefore, should note this fact when they are inclined to bewail the persistent wrong-headedness of their Tory acquaintances. The ultra Whig element—such as remains of it—is at his back. Some of these ultra Whigs are almost more objectionable in their politics than our hereditary enemies the Tories. By virtue of being attached

to the Liberal wing they get a great deal more credit than they deserve. They are in times of trouble like the present a kind of political Alabamas, sailing under false colours, and always ready to wreck any great ameliorative measure which in its objects stretches beyond the scope of their narrow vision. The Duke of Argyle and Mr. Goschen, who has just been made to bite the dust in Edinburgh, are fitting representatives of the class. Their whole political conduct, whatever they may profess in their actions or in their books, proves them to be utterly devoid of one grain of sympathy for the people. They are the embodiment of the idea of hereditary legislation, and if they could have compassed their ends the people of this country would never have been allowed a finger in the pie of legislation at all. These men and their followers are at the back of the Marquis. Nay, more than that, I believe that Mr. Goschen has been the evil genius of Lord Hartington in the present crisis, and, like the bad spirit you have seen in the picture, he has whispered in his ear, and tempted him from the straight path of rectitude. Then there are our dissident Liberal friends, of some of whom the surprising thing is, like the fly in amber, how they ever managed to get into the Liberal ranks at all. They move

Duke of Argyle
and Mr. Goschen.

The dissident
Liberals.

An essentially
safe man.

slowly, and every now and again the main body of the army has to cry "halt," and wait till they come up. They have strong sympathetic instincts in the direction of progress, but they like to follow in the wake of an essentially safe man, as they put it, and so they are at the back of the Marquis. There are, also, several high politicians—I will not name any names—who, as their conduct shows, are influenced by base personal motives against Mr. Gladstone, and are prepared to do anything to compass his overthrow. They have a considerable following who are deceived by them. They, of course, are behind the Marquis, and they are making a tool of him to-day. I say, then, that in opposing Lord Hartington, in giving your votes against him at the coming poll, and in my favour, you are not expressing your opinion of him as a man and a gentleman. You are entering your solemn protest against the reactionary principles of which he is the embodiment at the present time.

Call to the
electors.

Now, I ask you who may have any hesitation in making up your minds at this juncture to put mere personal considerations aside. Fix your eyes on the immediate principle which the two candidates before you represent, and vote as your conscience dictates. If you will only do

that, I shall not fear the result of the poll on Saturday. There are many men, and I candidly admit that I am to some extent one of those myself, who are pleased and even dazzled with the glamour of a great name. It was pleasant to have the Marquis of Hartington, with all the great possibilities which attach to his position and character, associated with Rossendale. And it would have been a cause of rejoicing if we could have kept him, and pointed to him, as the exponent of our political views and aspirations. But in no sense of the word can he be said to reflect the sturdy Liberalism of the district; and much as you would have been honoured in having him as a representative under happier auspices, it will redound a thousand fold to your credit if by a decisive and unmistakable vote you reject him as your representative. On other important questions that will come up for early solution he is not in accordance with your views. The fact is, he lags behind, and has always lagged behind, the hindmost even in his party. The sudden ripening of this Irish question has been too much for his political digestion. The retina of his political eye requires time to become familiar with any sudden light that is projected upon it. I observe that Sir Henry James, in two speeches he has delivered in the district, has

The glamour of
a great name.

Sir Henry James

devoted himself almost entirely to setting forth the claims of Lord Hartington to your suffrages on account of his past services to the Liberal cause. I should be ashamed to attempt to minimise these in the slightest degree. These services are such, indeed, that even his present conduct can scarcely overshadow them. But what about Mr. Gladstone's services to the Liberal party?

Mr. Gladstone's
services.

What about Mr. Gladstone's services, not to a mere party but to progress and freedom in many lands? What about his life-long services to his country and the people? Not the services of an ordinary mind, but of one unparalleled in its range and grasp. Sir Henry James, being a lawyer, ought to have had the readiness to perceive that comparisons are odious. If comparisons are to be made at all, I pit the services of Mr. Gladstone against those of Lord Hartington, and I say with confidence to you, electors of Rossendale, "choose ye whom ye will serve." Dismiss me from your minds altogether, except as the humble representative of a great cause and a great name. The struggle is not between his lordship and me, but between a policy of open-handed justice on the one side and the perpetuation of wrong on the other.

Tory tactics.

I see that Rossendale is placarded from Sharneyford to Haslingden with flaming

placards, printed in blue, and signed by the Tory chairman, calling upon the Tory electors of the division to cast their votes for Lord Hartington. This is a strange state of affairs. It were well that my honourable opponent held communion with himself, and asked what it all means. If I were in his position, rather than accept help from the deliberate slanderers of his leader and mine, I would retire from the contest altogether. But why should he hesitate to at once throw in his lot with Mr. Gladstone in this matter, and declare that he will work with him and by his side in a great and worthy endeavour to satisfy Irish national sentiment by devising a generous measure of self-government for Ireland? This can be done, most assuredly, as is already done throughout our colonies, without danger of jeopardising the unity of the empire. It is the merest childishness to say that English statesmanship is not equal to such a task as that.

Well, gentlemen, the time for speaking is well-nigh past. The time for action is upon us, though I am well aware you have not been idle even before this. It is only by determination and hard work that we can achieve victory. Do your utmost to win over any waverers to our side. There need be no abstentions in the face

Time for
speaking well-
nigh past.

Call to the
electors.

of all the speeches that have been delivered both here and elsewhere for weeks past. Do not be dismayed by the adverse returns in different parts of the country that have lately come in. Be determined that you, at least, will show your intelligent appreciation of the position, and that you will not lift one little finger to assist the party of reaction. Remember also that I have laboured under grave disadvantages in my candidature in being late in the field. This should only have the effect of stimulating you to redouble your efforts in my behalf. Don't for one moment be deceived by the Tory cry of "the Empire in danger." In the heated imagination of the Tories there is always something in jeopardy. At one time it is the Church, at another time it is the Crown that is in danger. But that is only their way of throwing dust in the eyes of the electors. Be just and fear not!

SPEECH AT WATERFOOT,

FRIDAY, JULY 9TH, 1886.

Delivered in the Brougham Hall, Waterfoot.

Mr. Newbigging, who was received with cheers, said: You will be called upon to-morrow to exercise the privilege of citizens by recording

your vote for the candidate whom you desire should represent you in the Commons' House of Parliament.

I have always looked upon the performance of this act of duty as one involving great responsibility, and therefore calling for serious and wise consideration in the person discharging it. Probably at no crisis in the history of our country—certainly on no occasion within the memory of any living man—has the responsibility attaching to the exercise of a vote been so great as at the present time. Further than that, I will say that in no contest that is being waged throughout the country are the issues so momentous as in this important division of Lancashire. It is not assuming too much for me to say that the eyes of the nation are centred on the Rossendale valley, and the result of your decision is awaited with feelings of the strongest interest and anxiety. I claim your attention, therefore, for a few minutes, whilst I submit to your judgment the salient features of the question on which your verdict has to be pronounced.

Power of voting.

Exercising the vote.

You are of course aware that during a recent session of Parliament a great measure of justice was sanctioned by the Legislature, by which the right to the exercise of the franchise, which had

The Franchise.

Reform Act
of 1834.

previously been granted to the town populations, was extended to householders in the counties throughout the United Kingdom. One of the results of this measure—and perhaps the most striking result arising from it, and one, too, that was foreseen by the leading men of both parties in the State—was the return by Ireland of eighty-six representatives, out of a total of one hundred and three, who were pledged to demand for that country the right to manage and control its own home affairs through the medium of a Parliament sitting in Dublin, the capital city. The demand thus presented had previously been made by representative Irishmen under the more restricted franchise, at various times, and under different leaders, but, latterly, under the leadership of Mr. Parnell, with a pertinacity that proves beyond the shadow of a doubt their unwavering determination to win the boon of self-government for Ireland. At that time it met with no response from the Ministers of the Crown. But when the clear voice of the great majority of the people of Ireland enforced the demand in language that could not be misunderstood, and which it was dangerous to ignore, Mr. Gladstone, listening to that voice, and with the courage that could only be displayed by a great Liberal statesman, introduced the measure with

The Home Rule
Measure

the provisions of which you are all less or more familiar, proposing to grant the boon which Ireland claims.

Now, it may be admitted that there were defects in the Bill, both in what it included and in what it omitted, though, in my opinion, there were no defects which might not have been remedied in its passage through the House, and by legislators sincerely anxious to do an act of justice, and satisfy what Lord Carnarvon, the last Irish Viceroy, has described as the "national aspirations" of the Irish people. In any case, however, the Bill has ceased to exist, and the question now submitted to the judgment of the country is: "Shall the right of self-government of its domestic affairs be granted to Ireland?"

National
aspirations.

The issue to be decided is so plain and simple that it seems almost impossible either to misunderstand it or to obscure its meaning. Nevertheless, the forces of prejudice and passion have been let loose to defeat the beneficent action of the greatest statesman to whose keeping the destinies of this great Empire have ever been committed. These malignant forces have been so exerted as to create suspicion and alarm in the minds of many, who, incapable of independent judgment, are influenced by the unreasoning clamour of the hour.

The Unity of the
Empire.

The cry of
"wolf."

But why should there be any longer withholding of this right of self-government which Irishmen claim? "It would destroy the unity of the Empire!" say the Tories. Now, I do not care two straws for what the Tories say, and neither does my audience. According to their pessimist gospel there is always something in danger or about to be destroyed. To-day it is the Empire; yesterday it was the Church; to-morrow it will be the Crown and Constitution. It is the "natur' of the baste." The cry of "wolf" is a part of their creed, so we will pass them by. If the cry only came from our Tory friends, whom we know so well, it would have but little effect. But the dissentient Liberals also say that it would destroy the unity of the Empire. Has the granting of self-government to our different colonies destroyed the unity of the Empire? No such thing. Nay, has not that very concession had the effect of binding the colonies with the strongest ties of loyalty to the mother country? And in each of these colonies there is a large infusion of the Irish race, who are as contented and loyal as their Saxon brethren. Without attributing bad motives to these Dissentients, we may point to the examples which give a direct contradiction to their conclusions, and counsel them to dismiss their unmanly fears.

Mr. Chamberlain, in his speech at Rawtenstall last night, denied that there was any similarity in the case of Ireland and that of the colonies—that the tie which binds us to them is only a sentimental one. I admit the want of similarity in regard to the tie, but I will draw a different moral from it than was drawn by Mr. Chamberlain. The tie which binds Canada and Australia to us is a sentimental one. It is one of mutual respect, admiration, and affection; of love and loyalty. “These are sentimental ties,” says Mr. Chamberlain, “and sentiment counts for little or nothing.” “Give me rather,” says he, in effect, “give me rather the tie of a paper union, even a waste paper union, signed, sealed, and delivered in corruption and bribery, and the basest treachery it is possible to conceive, and let me support that same paper union with the bullet and the bayonet and the bare walls of a hundred prisons. What care I for your merely sentimental ties? Your affection and your loyalty I don’t object to, but these are mere sentiments that you may chuck into the scale by way of makeweight. I am for the sword. The ties of blood, drawn or spilt blood, and iron are more substantial, and these are the ties which, more than the other, I care to recognise.”

Mr. Chamberlain
at Rawtenstall.

Sentimental ties

Your late right honourable representative

Lord
Hartington's
views.

may be classed as one of the Dissentients, but if I understood his position at the beginning, I believe I shall not be doing him an injustice in saying that his original objection to self-government for Ireland was absolute and unconditional. That is to say, he would refuse to grant self-government, whether such self-government jeopardised the unity of the Empire or not; and that he would pursue the old methods of dealing with Ireland and Irishmen, whilst at the same time tempering his rule with such ameliorative measures as might by the British legislature be considered desirable and prudent. Well, those old methods, of course, included the repression of Irish sentiment in the direction of self-government, and the worst forms of coercion in the event of such attempts at repression bearing the usual fruit of outrage and crime. True, in his later pronouncements he has made a gradual advance, and now expresses himself as prepared to grant some considerable measure of self-government compatible with the maintenance of Imperial unity. That is precisely the thing that Mr. Gladstone proposes. Then why does he not express his agreement with Mr. Gladstone, and his readiness to co-operate with him in accomplishing that object, instead of maintaining a stubborn and unreasoning opposition, and at the same time

A gradual
advance.

allying himself with the natural enemies of Liberal opinion and the Liberal party? The truth is, there is a halting indecisiveness in his language which his present action tends to accentuate, and the only logical conclusion to be drawn from his language and his action is, either that his mind is far from being made up on the question, or else that, being made up, he is antagonistic to any generous advance being made towards satisfying the Irish national sentiment. I hope that I have not misinterpreted my noble opponent's views on the Irish question. But if I have, I shall decline to receive his censure for so doing, and shall throw the blame on his want of definiteness in explaining his views in any of his speeches, of which I have been a diligent and interested reader.

Halting
indecisiveness.

Now, against this intolerant and mistrustful policy of refusing the demands of a people for Home Rule—a policy which has a brave “Rule Britannia” kind of air about it, but which in reality is as nerveless and feckless as a baby's arm—against this policy stands out in bright relief the noble policy of Mr. Gladstone, which would widen the bounds of freedom by carrying out the great principle of which true Liberalism—not the sham Liberalism that struts about in borrowed plumes—is at once the embodiment

A feckless
policy.

and the exponent, namely, the principle of trust in the people. I am prepared to trust the people of Ireland by granting to them a generous and safe measure of Home Rule; and I tell you, and you believe me, for you are stalwart men and can judge for yourselves, that the effect of this measure will be to heal the feud of generations, and bind poor bleeding Ireland to our hearts by that tie of sentiment which Mr. Chamberlain counts as almost nothing—the tie of the loyalty and affection of a historic people, than whom there are none braver and more warm hearted.

The cry for
Justice.

And do not imagine that this cry for justice can be much longer delayed. I care not what party or Government is in power—it may be Tory, it may be a Coalition Government, or it may be one with Mr. Gladstone at its head—but whichever it is, it will be confronted in the first week of its existence with this demand of Ireland for justice. The Tories, so far as we can judge up to the present, are likely to have a majority in the coming Parliament. Thanks to the Marquis of Hartington for that. He has done his level best to assist them. And thanks also to Mr. Chamberlain, who came down to Rossendale last night to assist the Marquis, but who had better have stayed at home for any effect

his cynical and selfishly-conceived speech is likely to produce on the minds of the men of the Rossendale Division. It would not be difficult, if there were time, for me to show the weakness—not to mention the unfairness—of many of Mr. Chamberlain's statements. It is a gross misrepresentation, for example, to say or to suggest that the Protestants of Ireland are opposed to Home Rule because of the dread of persecution. I have never yet met with an Irish Protestant outside the Orange faction that ever breathed an objection to Home Rule. On the contrary, they welcome and work for it as earnestly as do their Catholic fellow-subjects. I need only mention, also, the remarkable fact, which tells dead against this miserable bogie of persecution, that the great leaders of the Irish national cause have been Protestant almost to a man—Swift, Molyneux, Lucas, Henry Grattan, Flood, Charlemont, Wolfe Tone, Emmet, Mitchell, Smith O'Brien, Thomas Davis, and in our own days, Isaac Butt and Mr. Parnell. From the time of Dean Swift until now the people of Ireland have only had one leader who was a Catholic—Daniel O'Connell; and he once said that he would rather take his politics from Constantinople than from Rome. As for the Orange faction, words are not strong enough to

Mr.
Chamberlain's
statements.

The bogie of
persecution.

The Irish
Leaders.

The Orange
faction.

express my abhorrence of it. It is the vilest fraud that ever sheltered itself under the sanction of religion: so that you see it is only necessary to shake the bogie, and out drops the sawdust.

Michael Davitt.

And can this claim of the Irish people be successfully refused? It cannot. Let us ask Mr. Davitt, by whose side I consider it an honour to stand on a public platform, and he will tell you, in the quiet but firm argumentative way that characterises him, that it cannot possibly. And Mr. Davitt knows better than Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain — Cabinet Ministers though they have been. I call in evidence, also, the last four Irish Viceroy — Lords Kimberley, Spencer, Carnarvon, Aberdeen, with three of their chief secretaries. They are unanimous in declaring that this claim of Ireland cannot be denied. And all these men know infinitely better than Lord Hartington or Mr. Chamberlain.

A Conservative majority.

I have said that there seems the probability of there being a Conservative majority in the coming Parliament. If it should be so, then we, as Liberals, must try to bear the reverse with as much fortitude as we can command. I hope and believe that they will attempt a settlement of this vexed question. If they do, and if their proposals are generous in their scope, and of that

sufficient breadth and fulness as will satisfy Irish hopes and aspirations, then there can be little doubt that they will receive Mr. Gladstone's willing help, and the help of those who acknowledge his leadership. He has already suggested the feasibility of such a course. It is a great opportunity for the Conservative party, and it comes to them for the second time. If they can only brush aside their prejudices and rise to the height of the occasion, they may win a character for statesmanship that is not at present widely acknowledged.

Opportunity
for the
Conservatives.

In the meantime, I ask you, the electors of Rossendale, to stand to your colours. Your Liberalism has always been, since first I knew it, of that masculine type that resembles the race. It has been said by my friend, Edwin Waugh, our living Lancashire poet, that "Rossendale men are noted for being a long way through." That is true, and, as a consequence, they are a long way round. Their Liberalism is of equal width, and breadth, and circumference to their corporeal dimensions. Even Mr. Chamberlain, with all his cleverness, would find it difficult to come round them; and I have the greatest confidence that to-morrow's result of the poll will prove that you are true to your traditions, by refusing to be misrepresented in the Commons

Rossendale
character.

House of Parliament by a member whose policy, if he has a policy, on this great question of the hour, has never been formulated in words that we can understand.

SPEECH AT ECCLES,

SEPTEMBER 22, 1886.

Delivered in the Town Hall, Eccles, at a Meeting of the Liberal Electors of the Eccles Division, held to thank Mr. E. D. Gosling for contesting the Division in the Liberal interest.

Mr. E. D. Gosling.

In common with the speakers who have addressed you, I desire to express the pleasure which I feel in being present on this very interesting occasion. It is well that we should do honour to whom honour is due. It is always a satisfaction to a rightly-constituted mind to pay a just debt, whether it be a pecuniary debt or a debt of gratitude. We owe a debt of gratitude to our honourable candidate, and we are endeavouring in some measure to pay it this evening, for his bearing amongst us at the last general election, for the worthy manner in which he carried aloft the banner of Liberalism, and for the able way in which he interpreted our views and our aspirations on that occasion

throughout this important district ; and though we did not succeed in placing him in the position of our representative in the Commons' House of Parliament, it is evident, from the gathering which I see before me, and from the enthusiasm which prevails in our ranks, that we, as a party, are neither destroyed nor disheartened.

I have another reason for gratification in being present to do honour to our late candidate. From very early years I have been somewhat of a politician, and the names of the men who have in by-gone days distinguished themselves in the political arena—especially of those in the Liberal ranks—are familiar to my recollection. Amongst those names there is one that is very distinctly associated with my youthful remembrances, and that is the name of Thomas Slingsby Duncombe, the uncle of Mr. Gosling, our guest of this evening. There are others here present who will remember Mr. Duncombe's untiring efforts to advance the cause of the people and of freedom. In days when to advocate Reform was to court every kind of obloquy and distrust from the party of privilege and caste—and that party, truth requires me to say, included some even who were Liberals in name, as well as the great Tory phalanx who

Thomas Slingsby
Duncombe.

A free country.

Taxation
without
representation.

then, as now, were the avowed enemies of progress—Mr. Duncombe stood forward, both in the House of Commons and in the country, as the champion of the unenfranchised masses, advocating their rights, and, with a mild but persuasive eloquence, drawing the attention of our rulers to the disabilities under which the people laboured in a country which was called free, and under Governments which were supposed to be just. And no doubt it was a free country then, in a restricted sense; and undoubtedly its rulers were as just in the old days as a narrow vision permitted them to be. The working or labouring millions, for example, were free to pay the taxes which their rulers imposed, and these, again, took care to invoke the might and majesty of the law in enforcing their payment. But, however much those in authority tried to cloud and confuse the truth that taxation without representation is tyranny, there were wise and just men who brushed aside the sophistries of exclusive power and privilege, and proclaimed to the world that no man could be called free who was without a voice in appointing his taxing-masters, and that no ruler was just who used his power to withhold that right. Thomas Slingsby Duncombe was one of those honest and far-seeing and out-spoken legislators to whom we

owe a debt of gratitude, and whose names are writ large in the Book of the Chronicles of Progress. Names writ large.

I greatly regret as I have said—we all regret, that it has not been our good fortune in this Division to do as much as we could have desired to repay this debt by returning to Parliament the nephew of such a man. I do not despair, however, of our yet being able to accomplish that purpose. Irrespective of the testimonials which Mr. Gosling brought with him, he has proved himself a sound and able Liberal. We know him better now than we did when he came a stranger amongst us three or four months ago, and I have a strong hope and belief that if he should at any future time respond to an invitation from the Liberals of this division to again stand as their candidate, he would be returned to Parliament as their representative.

Well, Mr. Chairman, political events move Political events. rapidly in these days. Not two months have elapsed since we were being once more entertained with the spectacle of Government-making, and already we are drawing near to the end of a session of Parliament which, though brief, has not been without interest of an exciting kind, and which promises to be memorable in the future. I cannot say that the spectacle of

Lord Salisbury
and Lord
Hartington.

Coalition.

Government-making was entirely edifying. The Conservative leader in his movements scarcely displayed what we should consider is due to his own dignity and that of the Prime Minister of a great country. That he should have been willing and even anxious to shift the burden of responsibility from his own to the shoulders of Lord Hartington could scarcely be called a dignified proceeding. I am aware that that proposal is considered by some to be a self-denying act on his part. But I don't believe that Lord Salisbury was actuated either by a spirit of self-denial or of humility. The motives of his party are obvious on the surface. The bait of the Premiership was intended to inveigle Lord Hartington into the Tory net, and secure his allegiance to the general policy of his new allies. A coalition for a merely temporary purpose would never have satisfied Lord Salisbury and his henchman, Lord Randolph Churchill. The desire and hope of the Tory leaders was to effect a permanent estrangement of that statesman and others of his following from the Liberal side, and so to strengthen their own, a consummation which, from the Conservative point of view, is strongly to be desired. Coalitions are too uncertain in character to be enduring. Mr. Goschen and the Duke of Argyle would have been in

congenial company, no doubt, for they have scarcely an idea in common with advanced Liberal opinion; but imagine Lord Hartington, who has strong Liberal views, however narrow they may be in their range—imagine Lord Hartington sitting in conclave with such allies as he would have found on his right hand and on his left. It would have been a curious if not an edifying sight. There is only one thing that makes me feel regret that the experiment was not tried. It would have afforded the after opportunity for our townsman, Mr. H. H. Howorth, who, I am sorry to hear, is invalided by his arduous Parliamentary duties—it would have afforded Mr. Howorth, who may be dubbed “The superior letter-writer to the Tory party,” the opportunity of enlarging in the columns of his favourite organ on the “History of the Mongrels.” This would have been a treat indeed, and his disquisition on such a congenial theme would have been quite as interesting as, if more ephemeral than, the result of his more enduring researches in the Mongolian fields.

Lord
Hartington.

Mr. H. H.
Howorth, M.P.

I am much afraid, sir, that nothing but the uses of adversity will arouse some of our self-styled Unionist friends to a knowledge of the false position which they occupy. Some of them profess to hope soon again to see a united

The uses of
adversity.

Unionist views. Liberal party; but they add that it can only come about by Mr. Gladstone and his followers accepting their views. In other words, the ninety and nine who have stood by their Leader, and held fast by the guiding principles of Liberalism, must swallow their professions, must abjure their political faith, and be willing to follow in the track of the one silly sheep who has gone astray. This is an attempt to make the tail wag the body with a vengeance! The proposal is an impertinence. We shall prefer rather to dispense with their company than seek a reconciliation on such terms. As a matter of fact, these wandering sheep are not strong by reason of the strength of their principles. Their action is of a distinctly negative kind—it is due to a lack of real Liberal principle. They hesitated and they hung back, most of them; their votes were not with their party at an important crisis. They either withheld their votes or gave them to our opponents, and so fell from their allegiance, and, by turning the scale, brought down the great party of which they are members. Some of them, I am sorry to say, profess even yet to be proud of their achievement. They are only a small remnant, they admit; but they pose as a kind of “Jack the Giant Killers,” who have slain the great

Wandering sheep.

Gladstonian ogre—is it not disgraceful?—and so they revel in the havoc they have made. That is the position which Mr. Chamberlain has taken up, and his uncles, and his cousins, and his aunts, with a few outsiders who still believe in him; and, strange to say, they have the audacity to assert that it is the great bulk of the party, and not they, who have gone wrong. They and they only—so they declare—are of “the old original Eccles cake shop, never removed.” They remind me of the organ-blower who struck work in the middle of a tune, that he might extort more credit for his share in producing the music than the organist or the audience seemed inclined to award him. It must be *we* with these paltry organ-blowers, or the music must stop.

Mr.
Chamberlain's
attitude.

The last election proved, if it proved anything, that the epithet the “Stupid Party” does not now apply to our opponents any more, or so truly as it does to some amongst the Liberal party itself. The Tory party, indeed, on that occasion, displayed an acumen which, considering their antecedents, did them credit. True, the tactics which they displayed were not of a high order—that we never expected of them; but it is only doing an act of simple justice to them to admit that they shuffled their cards well,

The Stupid
Party.

moderating their language, or altogether holding their tongues; and whilst the simpletons of our party went about doing their questionable work, they, the Tories, voted to a man at the polls.

The vast majority of Liberals, however, know their minds. They have a goal at which they aim, and they will eventually reach it. I believe, too, that the time is coming fast when the dissentient Liberals will recognise the truth that by their mistaken action a great opportunity of conciliation has been lost or thwarted; an opportunity of binding more strongly the cords of goodwill and sympathy which alone can unite the Irish people to the great Empire of which they form an indissoluble portion. I for one, however, have no fear that dissension can long prevail in our ranks. The past of our history as Liberals is too grand and illustrious to admit of any large number of our adherents permanently forsaking the principles which have hitherto guided their steps. No thoughtful Liberal ever lapses into Toryism—it is only the time-servers and those who have been sailing under false colours that forsake the old standard. Our past is too glorious to allow of retrogression, and it is all before us to urge us on to future triumphs. The question which at present partially divides us is ripening whilst we wrangle and discuss,

Liberal
dissension.

Time-servers.

and before long we shall perceive the path of duty with a wider and a clearer vision.

The history of Ireland and its connection with England, both before and since the Act of Union at the beginning of this century, is indeed such as to make even a heart of stone bleed. Ground down by tyranny of the worst kind—not the tyranny of a single despot, which is mercy itself by comparison, but the tyranny of cruel and unjust laws, enacted in cold blood, by legislators who, very largely, had and have a direct personal and selfish interest in perpetuating the wrongs done upon the miserable people of that country. But men are to a great extent ignorant of that history. A stray paragraph in the corner of a newspaper recounting the evil influences that have been at work for generations to degrade and enslave the people occasionally arrests our attention; or the contents of a leaflet which is thrust into our hands at election times attract our eye, and for the moment, as we read, we are touched with pity and sympathy for Irishmen, and even stirred with anger at the misdeeds that have been so long perpetrated upon their country in the name of law. But our business, or our amusements, or our natural disinclination, hinders further inquiry; and so again our prejudices or our aversions grow upon

*The History of
Ireland.*

*Sympathy for
Irishmen.*

Irish agitation.

us, and we sneer at the suggestion that Ireland should have a chance of self-government. "Where ignorance is bliss," we say in effect, "'tis folly to be wise." But are those who know these things to keep silence or side with the clamour of ignorant or interested politicians—I will not call them statesmen—in high places, who are always ready to cry out for the application of strong and vigorous and rigorous measures to silence discontent? What of Irishmen who know these things—are they to keep silent? I deprecate as strongly as any man can do any acts of lawlessness or retaliation on the part of Irishmen, but I counsel them never to cease to agitate till they have secured the right of self-government for their country. Let us not be scared by the unworthy cry that doing this act of justice and wise policy will endanger the unity of the Empire. Unfortunately it has had the desired effect so far. But it is only for a season. The mists of ignorance will rise before the growing intelligence that is spreading over the minds of a people who in the bulk, however they may swerve from the direct path for a time, love mercy, and are anxious to do justice.

History and
Politics *versus*
Billiards.

And now, to finish what I have to say, I wish our young men would take to studying history and politics more, and playing billiards less.

Let them read history with unbiassed minds. If ^{History.} they will exercise their judgment I shall not be afraid of the result. If they turn Tory, well, I shall be resigned, but I shall also be surprised. If I hear of an intelligent young man who knows his country's history for the past one hundred years—he may go as much farther back as he likes but the last one hundred years are indispensable—if I hear of such a man forsaking Liberalism and turning Tory, I shall be lost in wonder. No doubt there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in my philosophy or in yours, but I shall be slow to believe that this is one of them. Allow me again, Sir, to express, in conclusion, the pleasure I feel in being present on this occasion, and in having the opportunity of joining with you and with the Liberals of Eccles in thanking our friend, Mr. Gosling, for his noble fight in our Division at the last general election, and for the way in which he expounded and advocated the principles of Liberalism.

SPEECH AT WEST SALFORD,

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 13th, 1886.

Delivered in the Town Hall, Pendleton.

I esteem it an honour and a privilege in being invited to take part in the present meeting, and

Mr. Benjamin
Armitage and
West Salford.

to join with you in thanking your late representative, Mr. Benjamin Armitage, for his gallant and consistent conduct during the last election contest in this division.

An experienced
representative.

I confess that it was a grievous disappointment to me, and I know that it was a matter of profound regret to all of you, that the seat in Parliament which had been so well and honourably filled by Mr. Armitage for some years should have been wrested from him and conferred upon another. Without speaking a single word derogatory of the present sitting member, it is hard to appreciate the reasons that induced the electors of the division, or such majority of them as voted for him, to reverse their previous and very recent decision by rejecting a well-tried and experienced representative. Mr. Armitage resides in your very midst. There is nothing of the absentee about him. He is a genial and respected neighbour, a large employer of labour in the division, and a man of great commercial experience, eminently suited to represent such a constituency as this. Under ordinary circumstances—under less intense political conditions—there can be no doubt that Mr. Armitage would have retained his seat; and I have the strongest belief that on the earliest opportunity that offers you will be able to reinstate him as member for West Salford.

I am sure it is a matter of infinite regret to us all to think how disastrous the recent abstentions of voters on the Liberal side have been to our party; and I would fain hope, nay, I would earnestly plead, for re-union in our ranks. There is a colour-blindness in politics as in our ordinary vision; but the exercise of a little reason and consideration will tend to rectify the defect. These unhappy dissensions in the Liberal ranks are the very nutriment and life of our opponents the Tories.

Abstentions.

Colour-blindness
in politics.

One naturally turns to the Irish question as the cause of our present difficulties. It is still, and will continue to be, the burning question until it is satisfactorily settled. It would be amusing, if it were not sad, to see how the interests of the nation are supposed to be confided to the sole keeping of a few titled personages. Lord Salisbury, it is said, will do nothing in the Irish question, or in any other, without first consulting Lord Hartington. So say all the Tory oracles from the *Times* downwards. The complaisance of these men and these writers, I say, would be ludicrous if it were not contemptible. Others will have to be consulted on the Irish question besides, aye, and before them. Others have already been consulted. Ireland has been consulted. The eighty-five represen-

The Irish
Question.

tatives from the sister isle are the answer ; and not all the Churchill-Chamberlain factions in existence, or that can be invented, can drown the all-but-unanimous voice of a people.

Tory tactics.

As a matter of fact, the rule of a class has passed away. Unless they represent the people, our so-called rulers, who have climbed into power by accident, are mere puppets. I am inclined to the opinion that our present Premier, hedged round though he be with aristocratic ideas, is astute enough to know that such is the truth. His Chancellor of the Exchequer certainly knows it, and that power has really passed into the hands of the people, never more to return to the hands of a class. But cajoling will be tried, and dust will be cast into the eyes of the multitude, so that the reforms which are looming in the future may be postponed as long as possible. The Tory eyes at present stand out with fatness in presence of their unexpected triumph ; but it would be ominous for freedom if it depended upon the Tories.

Home Rule not objectionable.

Is Home Rule, after all, such an objectionable thing either for Ireland or elsewhere ? I occasionally hear men of varied political opinions, some of them Liberal, even some of them Conservative, say : " We don't object to Home Rule in the abstract ; nay, we are in favour of granting

the power of self-government to Ireland ; but what we object to is the conferring of that power of self-government on Ireland in its present condition and under its present leaders." Is that a good and reasonable ground of objection ? When, then, do you consider will be a proper time, and under what Irish leaders would you be willing to grant home government ? That question cannot be answered satisfactorily. I have never yet heard a logical and explicit answer to that question. The objection is worthless ; it is the objection of an undecided and shuffling politician. "The Irish leaders are not to be trusted," I hear some Dissentient say. The Irish people trust them.

Objections to
Home Rule.

In that unworthy letter which Mr. Chamberlain wrote the other day, and in his superficial and contemptuous manner, he styled the Irish leaders "well-paid patriots." Assuming that some of these men, or the bulk of them, are not rich in worldly goods, it is surely no sign of criminality to be poor, and accept wages for honourable work performed. Even patriots need food and clothing. Some of us before now have advocated the payment of Members of Parliament. Be that as it may, however, I assert that the Irish leaders of the present day deserve well of the Irish people. Their determined persistency

Mr.
Chamberlain's
letter.

**The Irish
leaders.**

and unwavering resolution in the face of untold risks and difficulties speak well for their patriotism and ability. Their endurance in the fierce struggle in which they have been engaged of recent years may well command our admiration. They may not all be saints; but it is to the cause as much as the men that we must look for personal guidance. Give the Irish people the control of their home affairs, and trust them to weed out the black sheep. They are not all saints: well, they never are all saints who take an active part in any great national struggle.

**National
movements and
leaders.**

There are always men who, under such circumstances, are moved by fierce and desperate impulses. Two blacks don't make a white, of course, but surely a cause is not to be discredited by reason of the character of some of its adherents. Perhaps King Alfred and George Washington are the only sainted men who ever headed a national movement, and even they did not escape calumny from their enemies. Washington was branded as a renegade and a traitor to his King. I admit they are not all saints. Well, they were not all saints who took

The Reformation

a leading part even in the great Reformation in the time of Henry VIII. If it comes to a question of saints, I would like to ask how much, or rather how little, of a saint was King Henry

himself? Nay, even making allowance for him, Henry VIII. considering the times in which he lived, was he not as base and brutal a blackguard as ever trod the streets of London? The divinity that doth hedge a king was in his case a mere figment of the imagination. No honest man but would shrink from the touch of his hand if he were alive to-day. When the absurd and harmful theory of the Divine right of kings was upset by the Revolution, they were not all sainted men The Revolution. who guided the councils of the nation in those troublous times. How much of the saintly character was possessed by the advocates of such Divine right? But here I tread on dangerous ground, seeing that the chief sinner himself has been canonised as "the saintly martyr!" Even Oliver Cromwell Oliver Cromwell, with all his praying and psalm-singing, was not looked upon as a saint by all his contemporaries; and in our own day you will find numbers of men ready to vilify him. The Tory party, as a rule, have an intense and abiding hatred of the memory of Cromwell. But then the same party have said as villainous things against Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright as they have against Cromwell or even Mr. Parnell. Ugly insinuations and strong charges are easily made, and are readily believed and echoed by partisans, though they are not always as easily

The verdict.

Demagogues and
agitators wanted

Imperial Unity

refuted, even when they are untrue. I set the proved patriotism of the Irish leaders against these charges, and I give the verdict in favour of the men. What leader in any great movement has not had attempts made upon him to blacken his character? It is the common resource of bad men to cast dirt, and the more successful the cause and the man the greater the rage and the vituperation of his calumniators. If the cause which is advocated is a just one, I care not by what foul names its advocates are called. We owe every shred of our English liberty to men who were called demagogues and agitators, and viler names than these, each in his turn and in his day. The truth is, we need more agitators. I should like to see more Englishmen willing to take up the cause of Ireland, with a determination to assist their Irish brethren in the struggle for self-government.

There is no stronger or more loyal advocate of the union of the Empire than I, and it is in the interest of real union that I speak. I believe, too, that the granting of self-government to Ireland will be the precursor of many drastic reforms that are needed here. The party of privilege believe and know that also, and they dread the result, and will postpone and will hinder

it as long as they have the power. They tell you that the Empire is in danger, when in their heart of hearts they mean their own order. They are laughing in their sleeve at you, and so the process of hoodwinking goes on, and deluded voters rush to the poll at their behest, to save the Empire, as they believe, but, in reality, to support class interests, and bring disgrace upon a great and powerful people who refuse to perform an act of justice.

Laughing in
their sleeve.

Most, or at least many of us, have read the Dartford speech of our valiant Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons, in which, with brilliant effrontery, he enumerates all the Radical measures which he has adopted as his own, and intends, as he declares, to introduce at the earliest possible moment. To me it reads like an auctioneer's catalogue. There are all the lots ticketed before the mind's eye—Reform of procedure, reduction of expenditure, revision of railway rates, change in the incidence of tithe payments, relief to distressed nationalities abroad, popular local county government at home, ending with "three acres and a cow," with a great many other reforms too numerous to mention, and all, no doubt, to be sold dirt cheap. But have an eye on this glib Tory auctioneer, or he will sell

Lord Randolph
Churchill and
Liberal
measures.

The Tory
auctioneer.

The confidential clerk.

you instead, even with Lord Hartington as confidential clerk to check the account. I, for one, shall be careful to scrutinise his wares very closely before making a bid.

Mr. Gladstone.

But it is not edifying to dwell on Tory promises with the knowledge we possess of Tory performances. The mind gladly turns to other and nobler men and themes. Let us as Liberals never forget how much as a people we owe to the noble advocacy of our great leader, Mr. Gladstone. Think how little had really been done in the way of justice to Ireland before Mr. Gladstone's time—before he introduced his several great measures of amelioration. The Tories point to him as a fallen man, and would fain have it so. The truth is, Mr. Gladstone has never stood higher as a patriot and a statesman than at this present hour. He may bear his large soul in patience, foreseeing as he does the eventual triumph of his noble aspirations to strengthen and consolidate the true union of the peoples of this great Empire.

SPEECH AT MANCHESTER,

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1886.

Delivered at the Liberal Club, Cheapside.

"I'm for my own country first!"

During my recent electoral campaign in Rossendale I met with an old Tory friend, and, shaking hands with him, I ventured slyly to suggest that he might record his vote in my favour. I shall not soon forget the withering and upbraiding look which he cast upon me, as he said, "Nay, nay, I'm for my own country first!" You may well believe that I shrank as from a blow on receiving such a reproof. How but abashed could I feel, standing in the dazzling light of that dense, patriotic, Tory ignorance and selfishness?

"I'm for my own country, first."

"I'm for my own country first!" Ah, my friend, I noticed your fingers fumbling towards your pocket whilst you spoke. Nevertheless it is an inspiring sentiment, and as we repeat it almost a cubit is added to our stature. It indicates a spirit which, in its true sense, I am fain to believe actuates the conduct of a great many of us, whether Tory or Radical, and our bosoms heave with manly satisfaction as we give voice to the patriotic utterance. But it occurs to me to ask:

“Are we really always for our own country first, when we think or say that we are? Is it not merely an assumption with some politicians, the unreality of which is proved by their political life and conduct?” That, at least, is the light in which I view it, and especially when the assertion comes from the lips of our Tory friends.

Blind patriotism

The practice of a blind patriotism, however, is not confined to our political opponents, the Tories, if they are the chief sinners. It is to be found, though in a less virulent degree, amongst Liberals, and even Radicals, who, nevertheless, when they are in line with their principles are the truest patriots. We all have our narrow and unworthy prejudices, which we are apt, as occasion serves, to blazon as virtues. There are those who, though Tory in name, are exalted above their fellows in breadth of mind and vision.

Noble examples.

The elder and younger Pitt are noble examples; they, though called Tories, were true patriots, and perhaps the greatest Reformers of their times. So, too, was Sir Robert Peel, and even Beaconsfield—when he kept his charlatanry in abeyance and forgot the mean objects of his party. There are Liberals, again, whose soul within their body is no larger than a shrivelled pea—give them a shake and you can hear it

rattle—and whose reputation for consistency is just saved by the instinct for liberty which yet flickers in their breast.

“I’m for my own country first!” Is not the expression of the sentiment, oftener than not, the utterance of an unconscious and plausible untruth? Let us for a few brief moments cast our eyes back along the pages of history, and see whether my suspicion is the right one. It is not necessary to travel beyond the limits of the British Empire, though other countries, as well as our own, would furnish abundant examples of the truth of my contention. Neither need we ransack the chapters that deal with ancient times. Let us open the volume about the year 1770, four generations ago, and what do we find? A stubborn, foolish King, aided and abetted by a good-natured and well-meaning but weak-minded Prime Minister and an obsequious Ministry, attempting by threats, and eventually by force of arms, to compel unfair taxes from an unwilling and unrepresented people, the American colonists; and this, too, in the face of the indignant remonstrances of the intelligence of the English nation, backed by the wisdom and the eloquence of its noblest statesmen. With no desire for separation from the English crown—nay, in spite of the tenderest affection

The pages of
History.

The American
colonists.

The pettifogging
King.

for the mother country which was long displayed in their hesitancy to resort to extreme measures, the colonists were at last driven, by the sheer persistence in insult and oppression on the part of the pettifogging King and his party, to strike for their independence. The historian tells us that it was the darkest hour of English history. The effect of the conduct of our rulers, both lay and clerical—for, as you remember, the bench of bishops to the number of twenty-four, supported the iniquitous policy of the King—was to wrench what was at that time its brightest jewel from the English crown. But, if their ideas of government were narrow, and the result of their action disastrous to England, at least let us give our rulers, or some of them, credit for being actuated by motives of exalted patriotism. Like my Rossendale friend, they, with a colour-blind vision, thought they were patriots, and like him, also, they boasted that they were for their own country first.

The Cinderella
of the Empire.

Under this same regime, growing oppression wrought in Ireland with scarce an intermission from the time of William III., reached its climax and consummation. That unhappy country, the Cinderella of the Empire, though distinct in its nationality, had scarce a vestige of national life amongst its native people, owing

to the utter subjection in which they were held by British rule, composed, for the greater part, of Protestant landlordism and greed. Green, the historian, describes the condition of the country during the reign of the Georges, and says that "statutes passed by the jealousy of English landowners forbade the export of Irish cattle or sheep to English ports. The export of wool was forbidden lest it might interfere with the profits of English wool-growers. Poverty was thus added to the curse of misgovernment; and poverty deepened with the rapid growth of the native population, a growth due in great part to the physical misery and moral degradation of their lives, till famine turned the country into a hell."

*Ireland during
the Georges.*

Mark you, the historian, than whom there was never a juster or more unprejudiced, does not say that it was Irishmen who in those days turned their country into a hell, any more than it is Irishmen at the present day. It is well to notice that point, lest in our haste we put the blame on the wrong shoulders. How could such rulers do justice to Ireland when at the very time they had their own fellow-countrymen in the Colonies, and at home in England, by the throat? There was no freedom worthy of the name amongst the masses of the people in those

*Irish
misgovernment.*

days ; and the idea of justice is slow to enter the minds of a favoured and pampered class in the State. Their very existence is a defiance to justice. Class privileges are and can only be enjoyed at the expense of class disabilities. The justification urged for the misdeeds wrought in Ireland by the consistently cruel and blinded action of patriotic folly, and ignorance, and selfishness, a century ago, was just that of which the speech of my Rossendale friend is the reverberation. They were for their own country first !

Religious disabilities.

In those times, and in later even, matters of conscience were dragged into the political arena, for the religious beliefs which a man professed and held were made the test of his qualification to enjoy or be denied the rights of citizenship. Through bitter generations the birthright of freedom was withheld from Roman Catholics, Jews, and Dissenters in general. Hypocrisy and Establishment-bigotry alone secured exemption from persecution ; and, as we all know, it was only by dint of sheer perseverance in painful struggle, endured through long weary years, that the forces of blind zeal in the unrighteous work of exclusion were vanquished, and religious disabilities removed, or partially removed. Transport yourselves back to those times of fierce

The forces of blind zeal.

turmoil—you who feel that even then you would have waged in the war for religious freedom—
 and ask some hypothetical friend in the opposite camp for his sympathy and help in the cause you have at heart, and see with what angelic and reproachful dignity he meets your presumptuous request with the answer—"Nay, nay, I'm for my own religion first!"

The war for religious freedom.

They are for their own religion first. Are they for their brothers' religion second? I am afraid not. It is their own first and their brothers' nowhere—if they had their way. After all, it is the same spirit that animated the Scribes and Pharisees in the days of the persecuted Christ.

I'm for my own country first. It is a specious cry, and it served to justify the action of Tory and Whig landlords in Corn Law days, when they erected and maintained through long painful years a barricade of prohibitive duties across the entrance to every port in the United Kingdom. Distress and destitution stalked the length and breadth of the land. Trade was crippled—that, indeed, was its chronic condition, and the food of the suffering millions was scanty and bare. The patriots who were for their own country first, hounded Peel from office and hurled anathemas at his head for espousing

Corn Law days.

Cobden and
Bright.

the doctrines of Cobden and Bright; whilst no epithet was vile enough to stigmatise the conduct and character of those statesmen, who were branded as being the friends of every country but their own.

Peterloo.

But it is a gruesome story this enumeration of the wrongs which have been perpetrated in the past, and that are attempted to be perpetuated in the present, by many who imagine or profess that they are for their own country first. The Reformers at Peterloo, in 1819, were butchered to enforce the sentiment. The swords of the Scots Greys in the Birmingham barracks, in 1832, were "rough-sharpened" to play havoc with those who were criminal enough to demand reform from rulers who said they were for their own country first; who professed to have a fatherly solicitude for the concerns of their unrepresented fellow-countrymen, when in reality they were but-tressing their own class interests. Our blatant Chancellor of the Exchequer of to-day waved over his head the banner on which the same motto is inscribed, when, yesterday, he urged the Orange faction of Ulster to charge with all their chivalry. They have since taken his advice, and have charged accordingly, the better to prove their patriotism. So far from such men being for their own country first they are con-

The Orange
faction.

tent to drag their country's honour in the dust ; to damage and deface her fair escutcheon, and degrade her in the eyes of honest men.

What would have been the position of our country to-day if Tory principles had triumphed in the past ? Had it not been for Liberal men and Liberal ideas, and the triumph of such, we would have had no country to boast of. Our opponents reap where they have not sown. Have we not, as a people, struggled into liberty in the teeth of their bitterest hostility ? Read the records of England in the by-gone years of this century only, and you will agree with me that progress and freedom have made their way, pushing before them the barricades that Toryism had reared to obstruct their path. Don't let any such impostors chide the humblest Liberal with being "the friend of every country but his own." I have read that charge in many an execrable print ; but then it is one of those stale untruths which, like "Perish India," is always kept up in type in the office of the Tory newspaper, and its periodical appearance may be looked for with as much certainty as that the night will follow the day.

And what of the Irish leaders ? Shall we reproach them when they declare that they

Tory principles.

Stale untruths.

The Irish leaders.

Ireland.

are for their own country first? They have a passionate love for their country—

“That precious stone, set in the silver sea.”

Many of them have suffered, and, if need be, are ready to die for her. Is that to be accounted a crime to them? Give them a chance of redeeming their country. We have misgoverned it long enough. They understand its people and their needs better than we can ever hope to do. Do not let false pride stand in the way of rendering an act of justice. It will be repaid a thousand-fold. There is no more sympathetic race on earth than the Irish race. They are to be won by kindness.

Imperial unity.

This fear of disunity and destruction to the Empire is a craven fear, born of distrust, and selfishness, and cowardice. We have heard the like cry before when great measures of Reform have trembled in the balance, and it has only been by rising above such fear that we have consolidated and strengthened the Empire. It is a despicable Empire that needs buttressing by injustice, and that is the kind of Empire that is ever present to the Tory imagination. Like Deucalion, they have survived the deluge—the deluge of Liberal measures passed since 1832, which they said, and verily believed, would overwhelm the country, but in spite of ocular

demonstration, and all the experience of the ages, they are not taught wisdom.

Of all men, political hypochondriacs are to be pitied. There is always a lion in their path. They are haunted by shadows, and the free air of heaven breeds distemper in their veins. Instead of taking advice from a wise physician who has diagnosed the disease, and prescribes and is ready to apply the remedy, they put their trust in quacks. The quack nostrum for Irish agrarian crime, bred of misgovernment and discontent, and for Irish aspirations—for these are accounted as criminal as the other—has been coercion, administered sometimes with a spoon, but oftener with a bucket. The latest quack nostrum is the Churchill-Chamberlain bolus, divided into four equal doses. An attempt will doubtless be made to stuff this down the throats of the Irish people against their will, but the attempt will fail as it deserves to fail—they will reject it with scorn. It is a repetition of the old self-opinionated tactics, which lead us to confer or proffer a boon that is not asked for and which is not wanted. The proposed policy of dividing the country into four distinct portions, each with its own separate government, would be less likely to succeed in Ireland than in any other country, owing to the strong feeling of nationality that permeates and

Political
hypochondriacs.

Quack nostrums

Provincial
Councils.

Free Irish air.

predominates the race. Suppose we drop all this quackery, discard the physic once for all, and try a breath of free Irish air! Ireland will be none the less, but all the more, an integral part of the Empire when she has had granted to her the power and the right to legislate for her own home affairs. That is all that representative Irishmen claim, and whether you call it disruption or not, it is the least which they will accept.

Disruption.

But where does the disruption come in? By the way, that word "disruption" was a useful one to our opponents during the recent contest. It is nearly as good a bogie as the cry "Beware of the Papacy" is to those timid minds who have as little real faith in the religion they profess, and in this era of light and progress, as they have in themselves. Can it be called disruption to put an end to this feud of race and religion that has for all these dreary years been raging in the very heart of the Empire? Does disruption consist in destroying a system of misrule persisted in, not so much by intention as by ignorance of, or indifference to, the wrongs of a brave and generous people? But it is absurd that we should be thus constantly taking the onus of proof upon ourselves, when it behoves our opponents to prove their position. This they never

attempt to do. They are content with vague assertions and solemn head-shakings.

Yes, I admit, after all, that this great measure of justice which Ireland demands will, when it is conceded, produce disruption. I thank thee, Jew, for that word! There will be disruption of class interests. The axe will be laid at the root of the tree of caste and privilege, not only in the Sister Isle, but in this England of ours, and in greater measure in landlord-ridden Scotland and her islands. Land reform, which will be more beneficent in its results than even the repeal of the Corn Laws, is looming broad behind this great Irish question. I do not speak alone of such a trifle as the abrogation of the laws of settlement and primogeniture. These, as a matter of course, will be brushed out of the statute-book; but they are only like cobwebs gummed to the thick veneer underneath, and which they serve to hide, but which veneer will have to be mercilessly scraped off till the solid bottom timber is laid bare. The power, for example, to hang a dead weight round the neck of commercial enterprise and of labour by the imposition of what are called "Royalties"—though, God wot, "rascalities" were the better word—will receive its quietus within a decade after the settlement of the Irish question.

Land reform.

Royalties.

Stupid party or not stupid party, there are those high in the councils of that party who are astute enough to read the signs of the times, and who will struggle to the very death to hinder and impede reforms, which, when effected, will raise our beloved country to a higher level than she has yet attained.

Short-sighted
statesmen.

With the short-sightedness which characterises the expressed views of Tory statesmen on men and things and current events, Lord Salisbury has declared that the recent decision of the constituencies on the Irish question is irrevocable ; whilst his followers, or many of them, accept as a sweet morsel the words of their mentor, and flatter themselves as being now secure from the success of any future attempts on the part of Irishmen at obtaining self-government. There are even some simple-minded men whom, in spite of their temporary aberration, we count as Liberals, who are so confused in their notions, and have so far abjured their principles, as to accept as gospel the dictum of the Tory chief. Under what a delusion these men are labouring ! Why should they, ostrich-like, bury their heads in the desert sands of Toryism ?

Political
ostriches.

So far from its being as Lord Salisbury and his motley followers suppose, the struggle of Ireland for Home government has now entered

upon its winning phase. All had been mere skirmishing before Mr. Gladstone introduced his great measure. Does any benighted political heathen think that a cause which has been espoused by 1,344,000 earnest Liberal voters in the kingdom is going to be snuffed out of existence by the questionable majority of 76,000 which our opponents obtained at the polls? It never will—not if the majority were ten times greater than it proved.

Result of the
polling.

And this truth will soon dawn upon the minds of the Tory leaders, if it has not already begun to dawn upon them. There is evidence, indeed, that they are beginning to slide; and if it should prove to be so, who will gainsay that it is in keeping with all their past traditions? For such principles as the Tory party possess are mainly of the negative kind, notwithstanding their vain-glorious boast that they are for their own country first. Look into their history as a party, and it will not be denied that throughout their whole existence they have been relaxing their grip, finger by finger, of everything they have ever sworn to uphold and nourish; so that what was the Tory watchword yesterday is to-day a byword and a reproach. They are to be pitied, indeed, for there is no solid ground for the soles of their feet; and there is never a hospitable ark

Tory principles.

on their wide waste of waters to whose open window they can make for shelter.

Liberal progress.

Liberals, on the other hand, have raised a superstructure from the solid rock, and it can never be moved. Theirs is a continual progression towards a goal which they have in their mind's eye. Slowly at times, it may be, and not without an occasional repulse; but these have only the effect of enabling them to rally for an irresistible advance. They need not to make the boast that they are for their own country first. The man who is a high-souled politician, of wise and merciful instincts, oblivious of self, and concerned for the progress of virtue and the triumph of justice and right, is the last to make the superfluous boast, but he is in very deed and truth the patriot who is for his own country first.

SPEECH AT NORTH-EAST MANCHESTER,

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1886.

Delivered in the Culcheth School, Newton Heath, Manchester.

The contest in North-east Manchester.

I am not surprised that you should meet together to express your congratulations and your thanks to your honourable candidate, Mr. Scott, for his courageous and gallant fight in your

behalf at the last election in this North-East Division of the City of Manchester. The struggle was one of which you have great reason for pride and satisfaction. It was no small achievement on your part to reduce an adverse majority from 1,448 down to 327 votes, and that, too, at a time when grave differences of opinion existed amongst Liberals; and from the evidences of strong enthusiasm and determination which I see displayed on the present occasion, I feel persuaded that the next contest, whenever it takes place, will result, not only in a moral victory, as was your last one, but in an actual and tangible and absolute victory for the Liberal cause, and that you will do honour to Mr. Scott and to yourselves by placing him in the proud position of your representative in Parliament. Judged by what you have already accomplished, I am of opinion that there is no seat in Manchester more likely than this to be wrested from its present holders when the opportunity occurs. Apart from and in addition to Mr. Scott's natural fitness for the position, it would be a grateful compliment, worthy of the constituency and of the candidate, to elect him as their representative by way of acknowledgment of the great—the incalculable services he has rendered in the past, and continues to render in the present, to Man-

Presages of
coming victory.

*The Manchester
Guardian.*

chester and to the Northern Counties, in his conduct of the *Manchester Guardian*. I hope he will pardon me for making the remark in his presence, but I only utter a truism when I say it is universally admitted that, in the midst of the many admirable and powerful newspapers we possess, there is no more ably conducted or more influential newspaper, outside the metropolis, than the *Manchester Guardian*.

The political fire is burning somewhat low at present. Many of our legislators, tired of electioneering and weary of the burden and turmoil of a late autumn session, have taken wing from the scene of their labours and their conflicts, and are seeking repose for their weary bodies and distraction for their jaded minds. The lot of even a member of Parliament, any more than that of a policeman, is not always a happy one; but I am sometimes impelled to think that the editor of a daily newspaper is of all men deserving of our sympathy and commiseration. The appetite of the great public is inexorable. Every morning it must have its newspaper with its tea and toast, or as it bowls along by rail or tram to its place of business in the city. Like the hard condition of Mr. Mantalini in "Nicholas Nickleby," it is one continual grind for the editor, who is allowed neither interregnum nor

*The Editor's
lot.*

remission from his responsible duties. In the midst of them all, however, there is one solace that may well sustain him under his unceasing labours. He is the great political schoolmaster of our times. He wields a power which the greatest of kings and the wisest of statesmen might envy. And when that power is exercised in favour of truth and progress and good government, it is well for the country and the people who sit under and enjoy its ministrations.

The great
political
schoolmaster.

It will scarcely be denied that for the liberty and universality of the press, as well as for most of the other inestimable blessings which we possess through wise legislation, our gratitude is due in chief measure to our Liberal and Radical forefathers, who struggled and toiled that the succeeding generations might have greater advantages and live under better conditions, both of social and political life, than they themselves enjoyed. Some of us, though not very old, are yet old enough to remember the disadvantages that crowded like a hedge around our younger years; and the young men and women whom I see before me need have no difficulty, if they know anything of the past history of their country, in going back in imagination to the times of their fathers and their grandfathers, and picturing to themselves the many unfavourable circum-

The times of our
forefathers.

Past and
present times
contrasted.

stances of their lives as working people. I speak from knowledge and observation when I say that the working men and women of our day have quite a different appearance to those of the old times. Their food is better and more abundant, and the long, gaunt, sunken faces, wearing a hungry and famished look, with which we used to be familiar, have given place to faces which have a pleasanter and more satisfied aspect. There is greater neatness and more warmth in the clothing which they wear, and there is more of comfort and cheerfulness in the dwelling. To a very large extent these blessed changes are due to the triumphs of Liberal policy and Liberal measures. Some might be inclined to attribute the advances we have made in these several respects to the progress of scientific discovery and invention, and the mechanical arts. No doubt that is true in some degree; these have been important contributaries, but I have no hesitation in asserting that the vast strides which have been made in the arts and sciences are themselves greatly due to the wise and beneficent legislation of the Victorian era.

Tory opposition
to reform.

Now, it is a fact, as you know, that all, or nearly all, of the measures of which this healthier and better state of things is the fruit, were bitterly opposed by the Toryism of the

hour. The cry of the party, as a whole, always was for keeping things as they were, and every effort that was made to bring about a better condition of things was stigmatised as another attempt to undermine the Constitution. Some years ago, when I lived in a neighbouring town, in going backward and forward to my work I had to pass along a certain street. In this street there was one special dwelling that attracted my notice, for, nineteen times out of twenty, as I passed, the good woman of the house sat rocking in a chair by the fireside singing, "Home, sweet home." This woman and her everlasting ditty of "Home, sweet home," amused me much, and even set me a-thinking. The dwelling, as I could see through the usually open door, was lost in dirt. The ashes within the rusty fender stood as high as the firebars. The chairs and other furniture were kicked awry and littered with soiled and ragged articles of clothing, and from the doorway escaped what was by no means the sweetest of perfumes. The woman's husband, as you might naturally expect, had a dirty and unkempt appearance. Indeed, so begrimed was he, that he got the nickname amongst his associates and neighbours of "Twilight Bill." But in the midst of it all, the woman seemed to me to be eternally singing, "Home, sweet home."

The cry of the party.

"Home, sweet home."

"Twilight Bill."

"Home, sweet home."

I sometimes caught the inspiration of her song and hummed it to myself as I went along ; but, associating the good woman's domicile with the words, I could not help giving them a new rendering, and so I chanted to myself—

"Home, home, sweet home,
Be it ever so dirty
There's no place like home."

A new rendering.

And I thought to myself, how like our Tory friends is that God-forsaken woman in the midst of her surroundings! They have always been singing the praises of our glorious Constitution, and praying that things might be allowed to remain as they are. So they did through all those wretched Corn-Law days, when the food of the people was scanty and coarse, and destitution and starvation and misery stalked over the land. So they did in the times of big paper duties, and heavy newspaper stamp duties—no daily *Manchester Guardian* and *Examiner* in those times, shedding abroad sweetness and light every morning. So in the old, bad, dark days of religious intolerance, when men suffered disabilities for the religious views they held—and so in the midst of all the political and social dirt of past days—they were always, so to speak, sitting rocking and singing "Home, sweet home"; whilst Liberal men, with their

Religious intolerance.

wise measures were working and striving, tooth and nail, with the dead weight of Toryism against them, to effect improvements, and so make this home—this England of ours—a sweet home indeed.

Our modern Tory or Conservative friends enjoy all the blessings which our Liberal and Radical fathers toiled and suffered to achieve, and yet experience has not taught them wisdom. They still regret, and many of them try their utmost to impede, the triumph of Liberal principles. My worst wish is that they might have A wish. their desires fulfilled for a few years, and be transplanted back, if that were possible, to the times when the abuses which I have named were in full swing—planted just in the midst of them. After all, I don't believe they would, in that event, be much inclined to sing "Home, sweet home." I will be bound to say that most of our modern Conservatives, so transferred, after their present-day experiences, would be ready to turn Radical, and begin to ply the reforming brush against which they now rail and rebel. I do not mean to say—I am not so foolish as to say—that some of our political opponents have not some good points in their favour; that they have no earnest and sincere and unselfish men amongst them. There are many such, but all history

Tory delusions.

and their whole political career prove the delusions under which they have nearly always laboured, and the prejudices, begotten of ignorance and fear, that have controlled their actions.

But perhaps some of you are saying, "This is scarcely current politics." Well, it is current politics in this way, that Toryism or Conservatism still lives, and Liberalism or Radicalism lives. They are the two opposing forces or parties to-day as in the past, and their respective treatment of current political questions is much to-day as it has ever been.

I cherish the ambition that some words which I may speak will have the effect of stimulating our young men to look into history and these great political questions more than they have been accustomed to; to study and master them and make a gospel of them. Next to religion there is no nobler thing than political knowledge to engage their attention. No man can be a patriot, in the fullest sense of the word, unless he is a politician. Politics, indeed, are the religion of patriotism.

Politics, the religion of patriotism.

I notice that the Tory press, and even leading Tory speakers, are at their base, and to them congenial, work of vilifying Mr. Gladstone. It is a grateful and acceptable occupation in which

they excel. It need not, and it will not, disturb our equanimity. But the bitter slanders which they are continually heaping on his head, and the adulation which it has become the fashion for them to bestow on Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain, and even Mr. Bright, who was once, and not long since, the butt of their bitterest scorn, should give our Dissident Liberal friends pause. Thank God, these same writers and speakers have not begun to praise Mr. Gladstone! He has given them no opening for that. I shall begin to fear for the reputation of the "Grand Old Man" if ever they do. When the *Times* and *Morning Post* began to flatter Mr. Chamberlain—metaphorically patting him on the back, and saying what a good boy he was—it was ominous for his reputation. At one time he promised to be a power in the State. The glory, however, is departed. The parochial character of his mind has been revealed. When a great issue was placed before it, it failed. I know of no other politician of this generation whose power and influence have suffered similar eclipse within so brief a time. We shall have to go a long way back to find a parallel case in Parliamentary history. He has proved himself to be shifty and uncertain. It is well that our great, or would-be great, men, should be tried in

Mr. Gladstone
and his
slanderers.

Mr. Chamberlain

the furnace of great events. It is well that we should be given the opportunity of looking at our would-be leaders from various points of view, that we may find them out—that we may be able to gauge their breadth or narrowness—that we may prove whether they are dwarfs or giants. Well it is when a man is weighed in the balance and is not found wanting. The fierce blaze of political life is more than some men can stand.

Weighed in the
balance.

I say it with all consideration for the sincerity of their motives, but I cannot help lamenting the grievous mistake which some of our Liberal friends in Manchester made during the last election contest. I have growing hope and confidence, however, that their better judgment will return as events unfold themselves, and that we shall soon see them again, as of yore, fighting by our side in the cause we all have at heart.

This naturally leads me to speak upon the Irish Question—the question which we have to thank for the difficulties which at present beset us as a party. There is no getting away from it, try as we may. When casting about and endeavouring to arrange the subjects on which I should address you, I felt my utter helplessness to leave out this burning question of the hour. To me, at least, there is no other subject—political subject, I mean—which in any

The Irish
Question.

degree can be considered of paramount interest at the present moment. This must be disposed of, and disposed of satisfactorily, before legislation can be turned to the other important questions that await solution.

The Irish question is a many-sided one, and the causes that have contributed to its development are more than can be touched upon in the course of a single address. I will refer to only one or two of these causes at present. It is perhaps difficult, unless we have made ourselves acquainted with the facts and circumstances, to account for the chronic state of crime and discontent which prevails in the Sister Island. One of the principal of these causes, in my opinion, is the system of absenteeism, the eternal drain of money from a poor country by absent landlords. Indeed, the evils that are engendered by absentee landlordism, "The cut-purse of the Empire" as it has been called, are almost beyond belief. I cannot help thinking sometimes that matters in Ireland might have been very different to-day if Royalty had given a little more of its personal attention and presence to that portion of the kingdom—say, if the Prince of Wales, for example, had made his residence there for a portion of each year. The Prince is an estimable man. Taking him

Absentee
landlordism.

"The Cut-purse
of the Empire."

The Prince of
Wales.

all round there is, perhaps, no historical Prince of Wales to put beside him for the kindliness and *bonhomie* of his nature. Just think what an effect for good he might have produced on the Irish heart and mind—ay, and on Irish prosperity—during all these years if he had spent a portion of his time there in princely state, as he might have done to his pleasure and advantage. Unfortunately, he has been as much of an absentee as most of the landlords. I do not know, but I imagine that, with some proper attention of this kind, things might have been very different to-day in Ireland.

“But of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these—‘It might have been!’”

It is too late, as I believe, and we are left to-day with the sickening results of a bad system, and a sad catalogue of ills in consequence.

Absenteeism:
its evils.

The direct effect of this system of absenteeism in a country almost wholly dependent on agriculture has been the further evils of agency and the sub-letting of the land. Thence also spring these horrible clearings and evictions which disgrace the country, and which are largely responsible for the want of employment, idleness, destitution, and crime that prevails. I notice in to-day's newspapers that Lord Clanricarde, an absentee landlord, with a rent roll of £20,000 a

year, has issued no fewer than thirty eviction writs within the last week. Let me quote you the opinion of Michael Thomas Sadler, an enlightened Tory, and formerly a member of Parliament, on the effects of the horrible evictions of which every now and again we read in the newspapers. He asks: "What is the condition of the evicted Irish tenant? There is no employment for him to resort to, as is happily the case here—that the absentee proprietors effectually prevent. The desolate wretch is therefore, under such circumstances, driven to desperation, and, connected with a multitude of others similarly treated, proceeds to those acts of violence noticed so frequently in Ireland; otherwise he resigns himself to his melancholy fate and bears his sufferings in silence. I shall not speedily forget accidentally falling in with one of these, lying by the roadside, with a female infant in his arms, both of them very destitute of raiment, and evidently suffering from want. I learnt that he was one of those that had been 'cleared.' His wife, however, had died under the operation, and was therefore left in her 'native earth.' He had no home, but had come to work in the harvest of England, and thought he could safely lay his child in the field beside him while he laboured. His story is not easy to be for-

An enlightened
Tory.

An evicted Irish
tenant.

gotten ; but wherever he be at this moment, I had rather be he than his oppressor. Had I been that great individual, whoever was the promoter or the apologist, or whatever the temptation, rather than have quenched the fires of those now desolate hearths, my own paternal roof should have fallen upon and crushed me.

Honourable men Yet he was an honourable man!—so are they all honourable men!” These are the words of an enlightened Tory member of Parliament.

Now the land system of England, and the condition of many of our own small farmers here, is bad enough in all conscience, with all the mitigating circumstances of a vast and varied trade around us in a thousand centres of industry, and of settled residence on the part of the landlords themselves, at least to make it tolerable ; but the system of absenteeism, and, in consequence, the continual drain of money from a poor country like Ireland, is a cancerous growth, sapping the very strength and vitals of the nation. For an honest man to think of it with calmness or indifference is impossible, and for any man knowing the facts to ignore or attempt to justify the system and the cruelty it entails is to live a lie in the face of God’s heaven!

Absenteeism : a cancerous growth.

If Irishmen have learnt to despise our rule and its effects, can we be surprised? Nay,

rather we should clothe ourselves in sackcloth and ashes for having allowed all the past precious years of our lives to slide by in indifference to the wrongs of our countrymen and neighbours, and oblivious of the sorrows that have bowed them down to the ground. You point to the agrarian crime that prevails in that unhappy country—of the chronic anarchy that exists—of the contempt for law and order which is everywhere manifest, and you say: “Make the law respected before you concede the demand of the Irish people.” You are asking for an impossibility when you reason thus. Put yourself in their place and consider for a moment how much of respect you can summon up for the wrongs of generations inflicted in the name of law. I tell you you ask for impossibilities. Respect yourselves rather, and determine that neither by night or day will you rest until the grievous wrongs are in a fair way of being righted, and until the just aspirations of Irishmen are satisfied. When patriotism, the love of country, and the sense of bitter misrule inspire the breast, neither the prison cell, nor the gallows, nor the sword, ply them how you may short of extermination, will ever suffice to bring peace and restore respect for law. But, touched with a sympathy divine,

Indifference to
Irish wrongs.

A sympathy
divine.

we have seen in recent manifestations how the Irish heart can be reached. Defeated as Mr. Gladstone has been for the moment—and it is only for the moment be assured—he has shown us the better way by which we may win a people's gratitude and love. We have had a glimpse of better things; and whilst short-sighted politicians have been bewailing danger to the Empire, others, with clearer and loftier vision, have seen the way to insure true unity, and turn enmity into loyalty.

Land Reform.

There is one other reform which is looming broadly in the future, and which will come up for settlement when the Irish difficulty has been surmounted. I allude to Land Reform, which, when effected, will be more beneficial in its results upon the country than even the Repeal of the Corn Laws. There are those, however, high in the councils of the State, who are astute enough to read the signs of the times, and who will struggle to the very death to hinder and impede progress in this direction. Ransom, and restitution, and land restoration, are words that will grow in importance and significance, now that power has passed into the hands of a whole people whose political education is growing and ripening day by day.

Much as we desire and pray that our great

leader, Mr. Gladstone, may be spared to lead his party to further triumphs in the years to come, we cannot hide from ourselves the fact that, at his age, our hopes, however strong they may be, are liable to be disappointed at any moment. We cannot expect that his grand voice will long continue to be heard for freedom. Mr. Gladstone, as we know, has never been a favourite at Court. We admire him none the less, but all the more for that. He can afford to despise such accessories to greatness, and so can we on his behalf. His whole political life has been a grand and growing force on the side of popular liberty, and the progress of his country.

Our great Leader

Not a Court favourite.

"Happy must be the state
Whose ruler heedeth more
The murmurs of the poor
Than flatteries of the great."

We cannot help regretting the comparative isolation of Mr. Gladstone at the present moment, deserted by some of his most trusted associates and colleagues. But there are not wanting parallel examples in the history of our country. To me his loneliness and grandeur are similar to what at times befel William Pitt, "The Great Commoner," owing to his lofty nature which towered so much above that of his fellows. There is a similar loneliness and sublimity about a lofty mountain. I have seen Teneriffe, where

His comparative isolation.

it rises in solitary grandeur in the North Atlantic, but I have also observed that its highest and almost inaccessible eminence has been tinted with sunshine, whilst the clouds have rolled around it far below. So it is with the noblest of our kind. But he is old, is Father William. The thin locks that are left him are grey, and his noble presence cannot long be with us, a tower of strength to his followers and of dismay to his opponents. The work, however, which he has begun will not cease when our leader is gone; it will still go on. Younger men will step to the front and will take up the strain of freedom. They will bear aloft the banner of Liberalism, which has so often led us to victory. Let us each determine to do our part.

SPEECH AT PENDLETON,

NOVEMBER 16, 1886.

Delivered in the Pendleton Liberal Club.

Mr. Newbigging, who was loudly cheered, said: I esteem it a very great honour to have received the kind and pressing invitation of the President and members of the Pendleton Liberal Club to attend as your guest on this occasion. I have done little to deserve this mark of dis-

tion at your hands, as compared with those whom you have similarly honoured on past occasions. And, indeed, I would not, and could not conscientiously, have accepted the honour had it not occurred to me that in accepting it and coming amongst you I might by a few earnest words addressed to you help forward the cause which we all have at heart. I am fully aware, of course, that in spite of much effort, and notwithstanding that you had a good and tried candidate, you were not successful in returning him to Parliament as your representative at the last election. But you are now showing the true spirit that should animate you in your determination to so educate the electors of Salford that when the opportunity again occurs—and I do not think it will be very long deferred—you will be able to turn the tables on your opponents. The true spirit.

Now, I do not think so meanly of the earnest and intelligent audience I see before me as to suggest that any words of mine are needed to stimulate your enthusiasm for the great principles of Liberalism which we profess in common; for the noble work of extending the bounds of freedom which it is the birthright of those holding Liberal views to advocate and undertake; for the furtherance of trustful progress and individual Liberal work.

liberty that men who love their country and their kind are anxiously desirous to promote. It would be a superfluous and thankless duty to undertake if that were my purpose in accepting your invitation to come here this evening. Our object, rather, is to win over opponents from the errors which, as we sincerely believe, beset their footsteps; or, if that is an impossible task, at least to present a bold front to the enemy, lest in his haste and rashness he should be encouraged to continue his evil courses, by supposing that the sleepless energy that abides in Liberal hearts has grown sapless and withered in the breath of his arid gibes and sophistries. It is well, therefore, often to meet together for that purpose, as well as for mutual converse and encouragement, knowing that as iron sharpeneth iron so doth the countenance of a man his friend.

Lancashire
Liberalism

At the same time, though I see no signs of it here to-night, I am much afraid that we in Lancashire have begun to lag somewhat behind many other parts of the country in our enthusiasm for the progress and triumph of Liberal opinions. Our leaders, or those we have been accustomed to look up to as our leaders in Lancashire, are much to blame for this. Their desires are good and sincere, no doubt, but there is a woeful lack of earnest determination among them. Our

Liberalism of the past was more masculine in type than now. There were giants in those days, whilst our days have fallen amongst pigmies. At present it is to a large extent a kind of Miss Nancy Liberalism that prevails—a sort of stand-at-your-proper-distance, Liberalism. It is nearly all eye-glass, cards, and billiards. Pass by any of our clubs and, as a rule, dense darkness prevails—an ominous darkness—except in the billiard-room. There we have a concentrated and perilous light, fatal to youthful progress. There is the subdued sound of clashing balls night after night, but never, or but rarely, is the voice of the earnest speaker heard in the lecture hall. It is as though the good spirit of Liberalism had been exorcised. The backbone seems to have gone out of us and gone over to the Conservatives. This is not a creditable state of affairs. Can nothing be done to provide a remedy? Can nothing be done to infuse life and *verve* into our leaders? It is not for want of the raw material that this deadness and unfruitfulness prevails. I see hope and energy and sturdy Liberalism beaming in the faces of the large audiences that I have recently addressed, and I am more convinced day by day that it needs only the earnest heart, the powerful grasp, and the wise administrative

Cards and
billiards.

Wanted, a
Leader.

ability of the genuine leader to again make, as in the past, the latent strength of Lancashire Liberal opinion an irresistible force.

The policy of
silence
condemned.

There are more important questions awaiting solution in the future than those which have been solved in the past. Let us nerve ourselves for the great work that lies before us. Let us, each man of us, turn preacher and propagandist, each in his sphere, and to the utmost of his ability. It is bad advice to tell us to keep silence at such a time as the present. It is the advice which the Tories, our opponents, would desire us to follow. In Corn-Law days they would gladly have silenced the men whom they called agitators and demagogues. The People's Tribune continued his crusade all the more. We prefer his previous example to his present advice. We prefer the example of our great leader, who is neither idle nor silent. There is nothing of the fossil about Mr. Gladstone.

"Age cannot wither him, nor custom stale
His infinite variety."

Mr. Gladstone.

But to-day, with the burden of seventy-seven years on his grey head, he is the most powerful advocate of progress which the Empire can boast. Let us trust in our leader and strengthen his hands. He is as young to-day in his enthusiasm for freedom and in love of country as the youngest among us.

I do not hesitate to declare that the reunion of the Liberal party—the winning back of the Dissentients—is a secondary consideration with me—secondary in presence of holding by our principles—secondary in presence of the greater question of justice to Ireland. If Liberal union is to be accomplished only on the basis of rejecting the demands of Irishmen for a domestic government, then I hope and pray that it may never again be a united party. Rather than renounce the advocacy of this great question, I should be content to see the Liberal party relegated to the cold shade of opposition for years to come. At the same time, I have no fear of that. That division should have happened is to be deplored. But, in presence of it—in presence of our determination to uphold Mr. Gladstone in his policy of giving new life and hope to Ireland—it is well that the irreconcilables should go out from amongst us. We are stronger without their company than with it. Let the Dissentients remain dissentient if they will. The great mass of genuine Liberal opinion in the kingdom will grow by accretion until it accomplishes the purpose of its leader, and its own fixed and immutable determination.

The Liberal party.

The objection to Home Rule is to me about the most illogical objection possible. It arises,

The objection to Home Rule.

Centralised
government.

as I believe, from an ignorant prejudice against the Irish race, which, say what we will, has long had possession of the minds of Englishmen. So far from its being an evil thing, it will be the remedy for many of the evils that are inherent in our system of centralised government. At the present time every paltry local interest has to be dealt with by the one overworked and harassed Parliament, so crowded indeed with work as to be scotched and incapable of performing its allotted duties. The consequent expense and waste of time and brain are enormous, whilst great and pressing questions affecting the general welfare of the country and the people are neglected or postponed from session to session. There is a lack of dignity in our conduct in regard to the legislative machinery, with little of common-sense in it. It is as though we engaged an archangel to pick up our pins when he should be employed in urging on the car of progress or controlling and guiding the destinies of the empire. Until Mr. Gladstone's time—and this should be well considered—it was never once admitted or assumed that remedial measures should accompany, much less precede, measures for the removal of discontent and the repression of crimes, having their source and outcome in bad laws, in Ireland. The cry always has been for coercion—stern and undiluted coercion.

The cry for
coercion.

I remember when a boy, about thirty-eight or forty years ago, living in Blackburn, that what was called "The Great Botanic Remedy" was introduced into this country from America by a certain Dr. Coffin, who went about delivering lectures on the subject. Now, this Dr. Coffin was a forcible and plausible speaker; he had large audiences wherever he went; and he made many converts to his system—converts who believe in him to this day. I remember him coming to Blackburn. I see the man yet with my mind's eye; the attention and interest with which he was listened to; the applause which greeted him night after night; and the gratification with which his sallies of wit against the antiquated and doomed medical profession were received. He had a number of botanic remedies calculated to cure every disease to which the human frame is subject; but his chief and paramount remedy was cayenne pepper. A friend of my father, who was in the habit of calling at our house of an evening, was one of those who became a strong believer in Dr. Coffin's botanic system of medicine. He not only practised it on his own person, but he took it upon him to prescribe it for others. On one occasion I asked him how his patients were getting on. He had called on two that very evening. One was ill of rheuma-

"The great
Botanic
Remedy."

Cayenne pepper.

tism. He had felt his pulse and examined his tongue in the usual orthodox way ; and, said he, " I ordered him a good dose of cayenne pepper." " Well, and what of the other patient ? " That was a very bad case indeed : there was a multitude of complications to combat, with but little hope of effecting a cure. " But," said our amateur doctor, " I examined his tongue, I felt his pulse, and asked him what he had had to eat. Hum, ha ! just so. Well, you must have a good strong dose of cayenne pepper." And so the absurdity went on. But, after all, it is not more absurd than our miserable treatment of Ireland in the past. The miserable habit of coercion has been the uniform and unvarying remedy for the ills of that country. It is high time that this quack nostrum were discarded ; and so, indeed, it has been discarded, thanks to the dawning light that is breaking in upon us through the noble action of Mr. Gladstone, Mr. John Morley, Lord Ripon, Lord Spencer, and other far-seeing men. Curious to say, the tables may be said to be turned. The great landlords are having a taste of the coercion they have been accustomed to administer ; and, sorrowful to think, the coercion actually comes through the hands of their friends, the present Tory Government ! They despatched General

Far-seeing men.

Buller to organise the means of putting down disturbance and outrage in the south-western portion of the island. He has been wonderfully successful in his mission; and one significant reason of this success is his sensible and humane refusal to lend a helping hand to landlords bent on carrying out evictions, unless they are able to show good and sufficient grounds for their conduct. In this way it is pleasant to know that General Buller has really extended a protecting hand to the poor tenantry of the district, and, indirectly, has coerced the landlords into reducing rents. Sent to curse, he has remained to bless. This is a result that comes upon us with a glad surprise, and it marks the opening of a new era in our dealings with the poor agriculturists of Ireland. And it comes, too, with considerable surprise upon the landlords. These great landlords, the territorial magnates, both there and here, who in most cases were formerly the repositories of governmental power, always made the mistake that force only was needed to compel obedience to the law in the sister kingdom. And it was a very natural one from their exclusive standpoint, for it touched their interests and their pockets when agitation prevailed, and the people were goaded into incipient rebellion. It was for them to rule, and for others to obey.

General Buller.

The landlord coerced.

The majesty of
the law.

They put forth all their energies to uphold the majesty of Law, and the invariable instrument they have employed has been coercion and repression. It might be that a law was grossly unjust and injurious in its effects on a multitude of people—it might be that the incidence of the bad law was crushing in its severity, and that the people had protested against it even to the verge of rebellion—they never, or but rarely attempted the repeal of a law of this unfair and oppressive character unless they were driven into a corner and compelled to do it. Law is law with them, and it must be upheld, and upheld all the more sternly the more it is condemned. It has never been with them, or the majority of them—for there are noble exceptions—it has never been with them, except in a secondary sense, a question of doing justice to the People, of mitigating the hardships of the poor, but of upholding the law. It is that kind of spirit which is bred of callous indifference in some men born with a silver spoon in their mouth, whose bread is buttered on both sides, and who know nothing and can imagine nothing of the rigours of poverty and privation. But the days of indiscriminate coercion are past and gone. There can be no more coercion to stifle and smother honest discontent and honest aspi-

Justice to the
people.

rations. The voice of a People has spoken, and you cannot make a mockery of representative institutions by refusing to grant their reasonable and just demands. The government which Mr. Gladstone proposes to introduce would appeal to the better nature of Irishmen, and win their loyalty to the Empire of which they are naturally a portion. "But will it not lead to disruption?" is the question that is constantly in the mouths of some of our Liberal friends—
The cry of disruption.
notwithstanding, as I observe, that the Tories themselves as constantly fight shy of using the expression. That is suggestive. It is well to look the matter steadily in the face, and inquire who are the real Disruptionists. Is it disruption to grant the power of self-government to those who know their country's needs better than we, as comparative strangers, can ever hope to do? Would it be disruption to rule Ireland on the conditions of our rule in other parts of this vast British Empire? Ireland, though self-governed in her domestic affairs, would still be subject to the Crown of these realms. Unfortunately, this foolish cry of disruption has had the desired effect so far, and the real enemies of this country, no less than the enemies of freedom in Ireland and elsewhere, have been returned to power. It is simply childish to imagine and say that

The decision not
irrevocable.

because the recent Bill of Mr. Gladstone was rejected, therefore the question is finally and for ever decided, and that the decision of the constituencies is irrevocable. If the actual numbers of the constituencies are to settle the question, it is a fact that more votes were recorded for Mr. Gladstone's Government and their measure than for their opponents the Tories. But let that pass. That defeat should have been the result of the first effort is not to be wondered at at all. The history of every great and beneficent movement is one of unceasing struggle—often defeated, but eventually successful. The question of Home Rule took a vast stride forward at the last election, when nearly one and a half million of voters gave their verdict in favour of it at the polls, not counting the uncontested constituencies throughout the kingdom; and the enthusiasm and determination of its advocates will win increasing adherents, till finally, and before long, the measure will be carried.

Lord Randolph
Churchill.

With all his Radical programme of Reform and Radical pretensions I have but little faith in Lord Randolph Churchill. The longer experience we have of him confirms more and more the view which we took of the man—that he is the most unprincipled politician of the day. His whole career has been a veritable pantomime.

In all his movements we see the clown with his tongue in his cheek, and we are amused and laugh accordingly. The Tory party are his pantaloons on whom he is practising his tricks. Even his wit is the wit of the buffoon and mountebank. His speeches are as big and just as hollow as a drum, and we feel as we read or listen to them that his words are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. But he is a power nevertheless, and we cannot afford to despise such an adversary. He is a power for evil. We have seen the outcome of his advocacy in recent events in the north of Ireland. He advised the mean Orange faction of Ulster to charge with all their chivalry—all their devilry would have been more appropriate to the occasion and to his audience. He opened wide the door of religious and race bigotry, and the principal instigator of the Belfast outbreak is still at large. Nay, by the votes of Tories and Liberal Dissentients he has been elevated to the leadership of the Commons' House of Parliament—a position erstwhile filled by a Pitt, a Peel, a Russell, and a Gladstone! The tide, however, is turning. I see its flow clearer day by day. Many of our friends who halted and hesitated at the last election are hastening once more into the ranks. It is a circumstance on which we

The clown at work.

Religious and race bigotry.

The old
standard.

congratulate them and ourselves. The old standard will soon again wave over a united Liberal party. But I am not blind. You are not blind. We know that some of those who were previously called Liberal will never return. They have fallen away irretrievably. These we can dispense with, and we wish them joy of their new political allies. It has always been thus throughout our whole history as Liberals. We must be aggressive if we must live, and the fittest only will survive in the political strife. The weak-kneed, the men of small trust in the great principles of the cause of progress—these invariably fall away; these are they whose Liberal seed has fallen upon stony places, where they had not much earth, and when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.

Liberal seed on
stony places.

SPEECH AT DARWEN,

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1886.

Delivered in the Co-operative Hall, Darwen.

Mr. Newbigging, who was enthusiastically received, said: I have ventured to come to Darwen this evening, at your earnestly expressed wish, to address you on political questions. It

is clear that you, at least, are not minded to accept the opinion of a high authority that silence, at the present juncture, is the best policy for the Liberal party. If I had felt it to be my duty to join the company of Liberal Dissentients, and follow in their footsteps, perhaps I might have considered with them that a discreet silence was desirable. But, differing with them, as I do, on the fundamental principle that divides us, I hold that this is not a time for silence. When great issues are trembling in the balance—when to educate the electors and confirm weak brethren is a duty—when to hold our peace is to suggest a doubt as to the strength and earnestness of the principles which actuate our conduct—if under such circumstances we kept silent, the very stones would immediately cry out. When we see that the eyes of our opponents stand out with fatness as they glory at the victory they have recently obtained—when day by day we read the tirades that are poured forth from the Tory press of the country—it is a mistake, it is unwholesome advice, to tell Liberals to keep silent, and allow the verdict to go against them by default. If the platform were silent the press at least would be heard, and it needs all the combined force of pen and of speech to counteract the unworthy efforts that

The policy of silence.

The Press of the country.

are daily being exerted to pervert and subvert the conscience of the country. But we are not without wise guides in the newspaper press of the kingdom, and, therefore, with all its faults, we esteem our outspoken and free press, strong in the consciousness which we feel and cherish that truth is powerful and will eventually prevail.

The
schoolmaster is
abroad.

But it would appear that there is hope for the Tory party even at this the eleventh hour. The schoolmaster is abroad amongst them, and their political education is proceeding apace. Where be their gibes now against Free trade? their flashes of sentiment about their Fair trade nostrums, that were wont to set their meetings on a roar? These are scarcely even memories amongst the party; but instead thereof we have the Radical programme of the voluble Educator, on whose shoulders the precious mantle of the great Elijah has fallen. But I for one shall be slow to believe that the Tory leopard has changed his spots. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? That question is as pertinent to-day as it was nineteen hundred years ago, and the answer to it is the same as then. The farce enacted at Bradford on the 26th of last month, at which our voluminous and versatile Chancellor of the Exchequer was the hero,

The Bradford
farce.

was of a character to send our Conservative Progressionists—I think that is the new name of the party—into ecstasies. There was just one little omission, which we regret, that would have rendered the performance complete in all particulars—we missed the banjo or the bones from the hands of the principal performer. But, seriously, the sorry two hours' drivel that was talked at that meeting was nauseating to a degree, always excepting to the Tory stomach, which is of powerful digestion; and if our Dissident friends can be satisfied—nay, if they are not disgusted—with such political and mental pabulum, I am not sorry they should have parted company with us.

The banjo and the bones.

I am often burdened with the thought that the responsibilities of the young manhood of our country in these days of wide suffrage and enlightenment are immense. If our young men and women are ignorant, either socially or politically, the fault and the shame are their own, and the punishment will be theirs. Especially great, in my opinion, are the responsibilities of the artisan and working-class youth in these days. The essential difference now, in this country, and in this latter part of the nineteenth century, as it appears to me, in the relative positions of a young artisan and the heir, say, to

Personal responsibility.

Aristocratic
disadvantage.

a marquissate or a dukedom—given them both health and average intelligence to begin with—is, that the scion of aristocracy labours under many disadvantages from which the other is free. The surroundings of both are educational; but the surroundings of the artisan, provided he makes the most of his opportunities, are better calculated to mould the true man. The young man in the humbler station—in the humbler rank of life—who is struggling for the divine light, is less handicapped than the youthful scion of aristocratic ideas and environments. Surrounded by flatterers, who pander to his vanity and instil into his mind the false notion that he is made of a superior kind of clay to the bulk of his fellow-men, it is no wonder that he so frequently shows to mean advantage. For these and such-like reasons I am often inclined to feel an amount of sympathy for him. I am inclined even to tolerate the aberrations and impertinences of such men, taking generously into account the disadvantages of their early training and later bringing up, and the false ideas which they are so liable to have instilled into their minds before they arrive at years of discretion.

Allowances for
early training.

The Irish
Question.

One naturally turns to the Irish question as the source of our present difficulties. Let us

look it steadily in the face. We need not avert our eyes from it, for it will have to be taken in hand and settled to the satisfaction of the people of that country. From the days of Cromwell down to the present time, Ireland has been made a place for landlords—chiefly alien landlords—to harry and plunder. They have lived and fattened on the blood and muscle of the Irish peasant. Read the black history of Ireland, and you will find that, so far from exaggerating the misdeeds of Irish rule, no words are strong enough to use to put the facts before you in their true light. What of Irishmen who know these things, and whose hearts, if they did not bleed at the knowledge of their country's wrongs, would palpitate and burst within their bosoms—are they to keep silent? It is frequently said by the apologists of past mis-government, and in justification of their present action, that the poverty of the Irish is due to habits of laziness and unthrift. Any kind of stick will do to beat a dog. Are Irishmen lazy in America? The Irish race in that country can scarcely be called lazy and thriftless, who send home to their poor relatives left behind in the mother country at the rate of two million pounds sterling per annum, the chief portion of which contributions finds its way into the pockets of absentee

Landlordism in Ireland.

The Irish race

Irishmen and
the Empire.

Effect of
misgovernment.

American
slavery.

landlords. Have Irishmen been lazy on a hundred battlefields, where they have poured out their blood for the Empire? It may be admitted that there is both laziness and unthrift amongst some of the poorer people who are left behind in Ireland. And need we be surprised that it should be so, when a display of the opposite qualities was at once seized upon to their disadvantage? When the slightest evidence of thrift and respectability was made the lever to further landlord extortion? Persistence in mis-government and wrong through generations will go far towards transforming the character of a people. The bow may be kept bent till its power of reaction is well-nigh lost. I say that laziness and ignorance and habits of unthrift are inevitable results of the bad land system under which the people have lived, and the bad system of government which has prevailed. There are other examples in history that prove the truth of my contention. It was the same with the negroes and the mean whites in the Southern States of America in the dark days of American slavery—a system, by the way, which had the sympathy of the Tories in this country almost to a man. The slaves were lazy, and ignorant, and debased, many of them. Nothing but the whip and the scourge, it was

argued, would stimulate the nigger to perform his quantum of work. And they were quite right who thus argued. A system of slavery can only be maintained and rendered profitable by persistent tyranny. The negro was indeed lazy and ignorant, but with freedom, the stimulus of hope and self-interest has entirely changed his nature, or, rather, as I should say, has developed its better side. How is it possible for men to be industrious and thrifty when the benefits which these conditions produce are filched from them? Ask yourselves that question. That has been the brutalising custom in Ireland for centuries, until Mr. Gladstone bent his great mind to providing a remedy; and we can well understand, therefore, the low and abject and mean condition of many of its inhabitants. But give the people what they justly demand—the chance of rehabilitating themselves, of working out their salvation by their own right arm, of securing the fruits of their industry and labour, and a blessed change in their condition will soon be apparent.

Its effects.

I have such a feeling of confidence in the future of Ireland, provided it were self-governed as regards its domestic affairs, as to believe that capital would flow into the country like a river; that agriculture, and industry, and enterprise

*The future of
Ireland.*

A forecast.

would revive; and that it would indeed be like "a precious stone set in the silver sea." And it needs no prophetic gift to foresee and declare that this will come to pass. Ireland, with its splendid climate, might, and will yet, become the food-producing garden for Great Britain. Freed from the incubus of alien and extortionate landlordism, it will yet feed an industrious and thrifty population within its own borders, and of its abundance minister to the wants of the millions in England. What do I care that a Salisbury and a Chamberlain should try to stifle this demand for self-rule—the one with his twenty years of resolute government, and the other with his Brummagem specific, whatever it may be? The all-but-unanimous voice of the people, supported by the bulk of the Liberal party in Great Britain, and their leader, is not to be trifled with. A policy of silence may suit the Dissentients and their Tory allies, but it is not the kind of advice which either English or Irish Home Rulers will accept if they are wise. Conduct which cannot bear discussion, or which deprecates discussion, is already discredited. I want to see more agitators and more agitation on this Irish question. I desire to see more earnest volunteer-workers here in England, willing to take up the cause of their brethren across the Channel,

A policy of silence.

with a determination that neither by day nor night will they keep silence until the just demands of Irishmen for home government are conceded.

SPEECH AT NORTH SALFORD,

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH, 1886.

*Delivered in the Queen Street Institute,
Greengate, Salford.*

Mr. Newbigging, who was enthusiastically received, said: I would not care to waste your time and my own by accepting your invitation to address you on current politics if I had only a mere personal ambition and gratification to serve. I have no such object in view. I do not seek your suffrages as a candidate. I have no time for that. My wish and strong anxiety are, that something which I may be able to say may be the means of winning the attention of any who are inclined to waver in their allegiance to the great principles that are the basis and foundation of our creed as Liberals, or that may help more firmly to establish and strengthen the feet of those whose loyalty to their principles is beyond question. The Land question, in which your late, and, as I hope, your future candidate,

Personal
explanations.

The Land
Question.

Land, the source
of wealth.

Mr. Arnold, takes such intense interest, is one of the most vital importance to the people. It is from the land, whether in this country or elsewhere, stimulated by the labour and skill of the people, that all the wealth of the nation, as its original source, is obtained. Our means of subsistence and existence are drawn from mother earth. That is a provision of God which no man will dispute. The land is not the heritage of a few, but of all. We may be momentarily deprived of our just rights, but they are rights nevertheless. It is not necessary that we should each possess a portion of land in order to enjoy the benefits which the land produces and yields. But it is essential to the welfare of the whole people that all restrictions which prevent the possession and tillage of the land by the people should be removed, so that, in the widest sense, it may be allowed to increase the resources of the nation. The wider possession and use of the land of the country would be the best and surest means of eradicating pauperism, of reducing the number of the very poor, and equalising the distribution of wealth. These are laudable and noble objects at which to aim—they are such as might stimulate the ardour of our young and rising politicians—and to whatever extent these desirable objects are frustrated,

Land Reform
and its effects.

to that extent a wrong is done to the country and to its inhabitants. It is the duty, therefore, as well as the interest, of all who are patriotic enough to desire that progress should be made in material prosperity and contentment, to labour for the removal of whatever hinders and obstructs the attainment of these beneficent ends. Now, there has grown up in this country a system of laws which have their source either in ancient custom or in statutes of Parliament—Parliaments, observe you, composed chiefly of the great territorial magnates and landlords, and which place an effectual barrier in the way of the free sale and transfer of land—nay, worse even than that: after you have bought your land and had it transferred at enormous cost, you find, under certain conditions, that you have only a modified possession of it after all. By reason of these laws—these iniquitous and unjust laws—the people in large measure have become estranged from the land of their country, which has consequently become, in chief part, the property of the privileged few, who are themselves, by the operation of these very laws, prevented from developing its resources. The possession of the land, however, even in its restricted use, gives prestige and power to this special class; and their self-interest in these

The Land Laws.

Their operation.

Territorial
landlordism.

Land-grabbers.

respects leads, and will always lead, these men, with but few exceptions, to oppose whatever measures may be proposed for remedying the state of things which I have described, and giving a chance to the people to acquire a larger interest in the soil of their country. There can be no doubt whatever, in the minds of those who have studied the question, that the system of great territorial landlordism is the curse of every country in which the system prevails. Now, notwithstanding this fixed and unalterable opinion which I hold, I would be the last man to advocate the employment of unfair measures, or unnecessarily harsh means, to bring about a better condition of things. Very summary means, it is true, I would use, if I had the power, of compelling the restoration of land—of common land—which we have seen filched and appropriated by big land-grabbers under our very noses, and within recent years. But, for the remedying of the more serious and long-existent evils of our land system, I am willing to trust to the spread of political education, and the advocacy of good and wise men. The abrogation of the law of settlement and the custom of primogeniture will, therefore, occupy an important place in the future programme of the Liberal party.

The claim to the possession of the minerals in the bowels of the earth is, in my view, an unjustifiable and unrighteous claim, and ought to be disallowed. It is unjustifiable on the part of any single individual or class of individuals. The effect of this ownership, as it at present exists, is to hamper and hinder and handicap industry and trade and commerce, and to help in impoverishing and pauperising the people. When we are wise, this ownership will be denied to its present possessors. The right to hold this mineral wealth will eventually be restored to the nation, to be employed and utilised for the benefit of the whole people. But it will not be accomplished without a struggle, and it is to the Liberal party that the ultimate enfranchisement of the land will be due.

Mineral
Royalties.

The question of religious equality has been somewhat in abeyance in England of late years. But it will assuredly come to the front again before very long. It is an abuse that hangs fire. Religious inequality is another of those iniquities that will not be tolerated when the people are wise ; neither will it continue to be perpetrated when our rulers are honest. When the time is ripe for the remedying of this wrong we shall not ask for enlightenment from a bishop. He, and such as he, are out of court ; he is an

Religious
equality.

Interested
opinions.

interested witness ; he is, in fact, one of the culprits at the bar. Stand aside, my lord bishop. As if any sensible and intelligent person cared a rush what the opinion of a bishop is on such a question. His opinion is discounted beforehand. He is a bull on the religious stock exchange, and not to be trusted for an unbiassed opinion. The temporal functions he performs, or is expected to perform, are a standing menace and defiance to the principle of religious equality. It is a most sorrowful thing that religion, the most sacred of all subjects, should be associated with injustice ! But don't call it religion, my friends. Do not degrade religion to the level of these men's ideas. The spirit of their utterances is often as far from religion as is noon from midnight. It is, in fact, irreligion : it is infidelity to the Christ Jesus they profess. No, no, we decline to accept the narrow-souled babble of a bishop on such a question as religious equality.

Further reforms.

I need only, at present, name the other deeply-important questions of technical and free education and House of Lords reform, to remind you that there is no dearth of work in the near future to engage the earnest attention of all who desire the good of their country, and the progress and prosperity of the people. But, to that end, it will not do to be idle

and indifferent. We must each be willing, and feel it our bounden duty, to do what in us lies, to help forward the coming good time. We have many incentives to encourage us in the work. It was not always so with the Reformers of past generations. Their appeals, often made in despair, were addressed to the unenfranchised masses of the country, who had neither part nor voice in the making of the laws. It is not so now. When we speak to the people we address our words to the repositories of power. The old, bad, exclusive order of things is passed away. But there are many of these electors who are children in politics, and who need counselling and guiding aright.

Incentives to encouragement.

Something should be done by way of giving a political education to the poorer class of electors. This is really very important. It is among this class that Tory influence is most strongly exercised, and it is largely to them that their successes at election times are due. Here the Tory emissary has full scope for his proselytising and pauperising propensities. Pauperise a man with gifts and you win him body and soul; he will then vote Tory, and shout Tory till his lips are blue. Pauperise a man with ostentatious charity, undermine his independence, and in nineteen cases out of twenty you make that man a Tory.

The necessity of political education.

The great
commandment.

On the other hand, teach him independence, instil into his mind ideas of self-help, show him the value of effort and self-reliance, teach him virtue and truth, teach him, in short, the great commandment to "do unto others as he would that others should do unto him," and you awaken his nobler instincts. Trust him, after that, as to the part he will take in politics. Something, then, I say, should be done—some strong, active effort made—to educate the poorer class of voters in Liberal principles; for it is notorious that the Conservatives find their richest harvest in that particular field, and they take advantage to the utmost of their opportunities. If working men, even the poorest of them, were wise, they would spurn the gifts that sap their independence, and make them the slaves of their opponents.

The history of
Toryism.

It is sad to think, but it is gospel truth, that Toryism has always been inimical to the progress of the people. The maintenance of class interests and class privileges is the main justification for its existence. When the millennium of the brotherhood of man is achieved, Toryism will be extinct. Reckon up all the abuses that have been rectified within the last fifty years, and you will find that with scarcely an exception they were defended by the Tories as long as they lasted, and mourned by them when they were

dead. The genuine Tory to this hour looks back with a lingering fondness to the days of Protection, and would restore its faded glories if he could. When, on the other hand, did the Liberal party ever advocate anything that had the taint of venality? Or when did it ever oppose measures intended for the good of the whole people? We have reason to be proud of our lineage as Liberals. The unbroken history of Liberalism, from its birth to the present, has been the correcting and the reforming of abuses, and the furtherance of good government. Liberalism, indeed, is only Christianity translated into politics. It is the struggle of right against wrong; of knowledge against ignorance; of light against darkness. Liberalism and its work are the key to the parable of the ancient mythology—the explanation of the story of the fabled Hercules. Liberals have undertaken, and they will accomplish, the clearing of the Augean stables. The task is heavy, but the power to will and to do is equal to the work. Ours is a noble mission. Let us act worthy of our high calling.

Liberalism :
Christianity
translated into
politics.

These same Tory hands that tried all they could to perpetuate the abuses of a bygone time are now again in power. The same principles actuate the men. Veiled they may be under

Legislators for a
class.

pretence of sympathy for the people, but, believe me, it is only pretence. The repositories of privilege will be slow to unloose their grasp of what concerns their own order. They will only do it under compulsion. They have always been the legislators for a class, and that class themselves. They have been worsted, it is true, in a hundred fights, but they will cling with a bulldog tenacity of grasp to what remains of their vested interests. They concede only that they may hold. Whilst they hold the reins of Government we will wring from them what we can of useful measures, but, all the same, our best efforts must be employed to dislodge them.

Measure of the
stability of the
Empire.

I have recently spent a good deal of time in London, and, as you are aware, there are or have been large numbers of Colonists in the metropolis. I have had opportunities of conversing with some of these, and I find them Home Rulers to a man. They are utterly at a loss to understand the narrow insular ideas that hold many of us in bondage. They say, and say truly, that the greatness of the Empire consists chiefly in our Colonial and Indian possessions. All the colonies have Home Rule in the widest sense, and this very circumstance is the measure of the safety and stability of the Empire. The American States to-day might have been under

the British Crown if our blind bigoted rulers of a century ago had shown wisdom in their day and generation, by allowing the American people of those early days the power and the right of self-government. It was sheer persistence in wrong-doing on our part that drove them into rebellion; and even when, as rebels, they successfully resisted our arms, the timely concession of fair dealing, and the grant of self-government would have attached them again to the bosom of the mother country; but persistence in attempted oppression drove them like Hagar into the wilderness. Happily they have succeeded in making it blossom like the rose.

I see that Mr. Chamberlain is rustivating in the benighted East—patronising the unspeakable Turk. If he had paid a visit to our Australian or Canadian colonies he might have returned with expanded vision. To be sure he would have missed the snuffbox. The colonists, whatever their faults, do not cast dust in our eyes. If Mr. Chamberlain had only imitated the commonplace Lancashire people, and paid a visit to the Isle of Man, he would have found a statutory Parliament in control of that interesting portion of Her Majesty's dominions. He would have found contentment among the population, the most devoted loyalty to the

Mr. Chamberlain

Home Rule in
the Isle of Man.

The
unpardonable
sin in politics.

Crown, and an amount of happiness and satisfaction, and to a surprising degree an absence of that extreme poverty which is so largely prevalent in Ireland, although to a great extent the inhabitants of the island are of a race which is identical with the Irish race. This small Manx island is a standing reproach to the opponents of Home Rule. It gives a living contradiction to all their sophistical arguments or assertions—for they are not to be dignified by the name of arguments—about disruption and disintegration and separation. In the face of such an example at our very doors, within the very circle of the British Isles, our opponents ought to be ashamed of their dog-in-the-manger action. If there is an unpardonable sin in politics they are guilty of it, for they are sinning against light and knowledge. Patronise the Turk who will, we care a hundred-fold more for the welfare of our Irish kinsmen. And let not reactionists cherish the vain hope that agitation on this question will cease. Let them not imagine that the hopes and aspirations of Irishmen can ever be extinguished, either by a policy of gush or repression. The best intellects in Ireland—the greatest statesmen of that country—have in every generation nursed the fond hope of a national life; and now that their cause has been espoused by the

Liberal party in this country the realisation of their hopes is within measurable distance.

I see by the newspapers that the dissentient Liberals are going to hold a conference shortly.

*The Conference
of Dissentients.*

They are groping for more light, some of them, and they are going up to London in search of it. But they will fail to find it. They will repeat and they will listen to, the old, stale, threadbare platitudes about the unity of the Empire—about disruption, and separation, and disintegration—but never a kindly and sympathetic word for poor Ireland in her bitter sorrow and her hopes deferred. The Dissentients, so far as Ireland is concerned, are the know-nothings and the do-nothings of politics. Their policy, if they have one, is a mere negation. They cannot trust the Irish leaders and the Irish people, they say; and yet they are putting their trust in and lending their help to worse men. I set the Irish Parliamentary leaders against your Churchills, your Chaplins, and your Bartletts, and I say they will not suffer by comparison. They may not all have broad acres to back them—they may not have the guinea stamp of conventional rank—but there is the ring of genuine metal in their high resolve, in their lofty aim and steady determination to win existence for their country under better conditions. Is it not unreasonable

*The know-
nothings and the
do-nothings.*

A solution
desired.

—unreasonable at least on the part of Liberals—to continue to refuse this honest and honourable and praiseworthy demand on the part of Ireland? Come, let us take counsel together, with the anxious desire to satisfy Ireland, not necessarily doing an injury to our common country. Let reason and sweet reasonableness control our judgment in our efforts to find the desired solution. What say our Unionist friends to that? Hitherto they have proposed nothing and suggested nothing. Metaphorically they stand aside with a kind of hang-dog expression in their countenances, and receive our approaches with a grunt. This is neither charitable nor manly. If they prefer Lord Salisbury's twenty years of resolute government, let them declare it like men, and we shall then know where we stand in relation to them. We shall then be content, or at least resigned, to lose their help and co-operation, until reason and the further bitter lessons of experience lead them into the better way. That this will be the eventual result I have no manner of doubt. In the meantime we will continue our crusade. The political sky may be obscured for the moment, with scarce the twinkle of a star to remind us of the light; but assuredly the sun will rise in the morning, strong and powerful and penetrating, and the present dark-

The crusade to
be continued.

ness of bigotry and self-interest, and the mists of ignorance and prejudice, will vanish before the light of day.

I want you to help in the good work that lies before us in the coming time. I cannot too often impress upon the minds of my countrymen the fact that never until Mr. Gladstone put his hand to the work was it considered desirable and necessary to introduce remedial legislation for Ireland. If the people were momentarily quiet and undisturbed, the country was neglected and God-forsaken, so far as our legislators were concerned; and when discontent and crime, due to bad and oppressive laws and unrighteous landlords, prevailed, then there was a stir amongst the political ignoramuses at St. Stephen's, and the eternal blister of coercion was applied to the sores of the people. It was the great heart of Mr. Gladstone that led him to perceive the true remedy; the great mind of our leader that led him to apply his statesmanlike efforts to end this cruel and unwise system of misrule—this hideous system of repression. Repression is the name for it. The spring is only kept down, when it is kept down, by the dead weight of iron and lead and big battalions. It is as though the doctor attempted to prevent eruptions on the human body by means of pressure rather than by

Our policy
towards Ireland.

The cabal. remedial physic. And yet it is against Mr. Gladstone that this cabal of Toryism and recreant Liberalism raises its voice. They would fain stifle the promptings of conscience in the minds of the people of England. They hope by their efforts once more to harden our hearts against Irishmen. I believe they will fail. A great light has begun to break on the minds of the English people in regard to this question of justice to Ireland; and shall we, the rank and file, desert our leader in his noble efforts to do justice, not only to Ireland but to ourselves and to the Empire? "Never," you say; and I call upon you to fulfil this pledge by word and pen and action on every opportunity that presents itself. I ask you to *make* the opportunity, and be determined that nothing will cause you to swerve from this honest resolve you have formed until it is consummated.

A call to action.

SPEECH AT HEYWOOD,

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11TH, 1886.

*Delivered in the Assembly Room, Reform Club,
Heywood.*

Mr. Newbigging said: From what I know of the vigour and earnestness of the Liberal party in Heywood I feel that it would be impertinent

in me to suggest that you needed the stimulus of any poor words that I am able to speak. I did not accept your invitation to come to this meeting with any secret thought that your hold of Liberal principles required to be either justified or strengthened. You appreciate and understand those principles better than I can explain them, and I know that you at least are not afraid of carrying them out to their full logical issue. But I was willing to join with you in your congratulations to your esteemed representative in Parliament, and my valued friend of many years, Mr. Isaac Hoyle, for the able and successful fight which he made in this division at the last and previous elections. I trust that he may long continue worthily to represent you in Parliament, and enjoy your confidence and support. He is a fitting representative of a large manufacturing constituency like this, possessing as he does a close personal acquaintance with the interests and the duties both of the employers and the employed.

The election in
the Heywood
Division.

I was in hopes, on Wednesday morning last, when I opened my daily newspaper, that I might find something new in the speeches of the Liberal Unionists, as they call themselves, but Dissenters as they are properly called, at the conference in London on Tuesday. I was in hopes that I

The Unionist
Conference.

A conspicuous
absentee.

might find something in their speeches on which I could congratulate you as Liberals; or if not that, then some new arguments from their point of view which it might be worth while to try to refute. In this hope, however, I am disappointed. The meeting was held, a great fanfare was made, class and privilege were represented in overwhelming numbers. Coronets were there in abundance, big landlords and big money-lenders. Lord Hartington was present, of course, and that shadow, called Sir Henry James, that dogs his footsteps, whispering into his ear like another Mephistopheles. But where was the true representative of the people—of the popular vote, the greatest power in England to-day? He was conspicuous by his absence. Have the speakers at that meeting, from Lord Hartington down to the most obscure duke, contributed one single suggestion towards the solution of the grave problem that confronts us and them? Have they shed one single ray of light to guide the country to a solution of the Irish question? Did they offer one statesmanlike proposal for the pacification and satisfaction of Ireland? Not one. It was simply a great coercion meeting. From letters read to speeches delivered, not a man of them but had coercion in his heart, and yet these men arrogate to themselves the name of

statesmen. They are mere political quack doctors, and have only one specific in their whole pharmacopæia, and that is coercion. The company were loud in their protestations in favour of imperial unity, which nobody, least of all Mr. Gladstone, wishes to disturb—nay, which he our leader and we his followers desire above all things to promote. They were loud in their boast of our glorious Constitution, which, so far as it is really glorious, Mr. Gladstone has helped to make more by a hundred-fold than all of them put together. But reckon them up: reckon up the names that are paraded before our benighted eyes—the aristocratic dukes, the men of wealth and high station—we will make an exception of two or three of them—but take stock of the rest, and tell me what measure for the good of their country has ever been initiated by one of them. Has any of them done one act of statesmanship for which he will be remembered by a grateful posterity? Not one of them. Unless their future is superior to their past—unless they turn over a new leaf, which is hardly likely—they will sink into unremembered graves. Did I say unremembered? Scarcely that, for some of them will be remembered as amongst the most virulent and embittered opponents of conferring the franchise on you

Political quack
doctors.

Unremembered
graves.

Opponents of
the Franchise.

the men whom I am now addressing. They were as strong in their denial to you of your rights as Englishmen as they are to-day in their denial of justice to Ireland. In spite of their protestations and their prophecies of evil, the good sense of Parliament prevailed, and you are here to-day, each man of you that has a vote, with the power to exercise that vote which they denied to you, and which they would gladly have withheld. Do such men deserve one spark of our confidence? Shall we be willing to play into their hands, now that they would continue this exclusive and oppressive policy against Ireland? I, for one, refuse to be made the tool of such men. They think that they are the high and mighty and noble of the land—this land that has been forward to sympathise with the oppressed. But there is something mightier and nobler than them all, and that is a just cause. They tell Irishmen now, as they have ever told them: “If you do not accept our nostrums willingly, we will cram them down your throats.” They have said the same thing, they have tried to do the same thing before, and they have failed; and now, when Ireland is louder than ever in her demand for justice, when she is stronger than ever in her power to demand justice, they have nothing but the old faded and

A just cause.

tattered prescription to dangle before our eyes—
 coercion. And yet these men call themselves
 statesmen! They had many and bitter things to
 say against Ireland and its people, and Mr.
 Gladstone and we who accept and glory in his
 leadership. That is not to be wondered at.
 Neither was it unexpected. Men who have
 done you an injury rarely forgive. They need
 to speak strongly to justify their previous con-
 duct, and make believe that you are in the
 wrong and not they. But with all their vaunting
 and sham patriotism, I would rather be in com-
 pany with our noble leader, Mr. Gladstone, with
 Mr. John Morley, with Lords Spencer, Ripon,
 and Rosebery, than shout "Rule Britannia"
 with all the Goschens, the St. Albans, the
 Graftons, and the Westminsterers that crowded
 the rooms of the Hotel Metropole to the
 exclusion of better people. In spite of all their
 vauntings—nay, largely by reason of them—the
 cause of Home Rule in Ireland has taken a
 forward stride this week.

A tattered
prescription.

A forward stride

Now, we are not called upon as Liberals, or as
 sympathisers with Ireland, to justify every act
 or speech of Mr. Dillon, or the act and speech
 of any other hot-headed Irishman; but neither,
 surely, is it a duty incumbent upon us to justify
 or palliate the conduct of rapacious landlords,

Lord
Hartington's
attitude.

even when they are acting within what may be termed their legal rights. Lord Hartington, it is evident from the whole tenor of his speeches, is by no means sanguine of success in this attempted persistence in the old, effete policy of force. There is, in spite of a show of strength, a timidity in his language, by which we may divine the want of real confidence which he feels in its results. He, at least, is statesman enough to know, whether the others know it or not, that England will be none the less great, but infinitely greater and stronger, when she has ceased to rule Ireland by the bayonet. But Ireland has nothing to fear, so far as the final result is concerned, from the blatant words spoken at this meeting of coercionists. And she does not fear them. She can afford to despise them. The great Liberal heart of England, with its leaders, is with her. Put all your dukes and lords and expectant lords, with their coronets and other haberdashery in one scale, and this leader of ours in the other, and he will cause them to kick the beam. The true Liberal or Radical—employ which designation you prefer—does not, however, despise a lord simply for the reason that he is a lord. On the contrary, when we find a man who, though reared in the purple, and hedged round with dignities—imaginary or con-

Imaginary or
conventional
dignities.

ventional dignities, for that is really all they amount to—when we find such a man who has yet a Liberal mind, and can rise superior to the aristocratic and exclusive station in which so many are cribbed, cabined, and confined, we honour him all the more. And such a man is deserving of all honour, considering the drawbacks with which he, as belonging to the privileged, or, from my point of view, unprivileged, and aristocratic class, is walled round on every side. How often it is, and how true it is, that

“Princes and lordlings from their very youth
Are strangers to the voice of truth.”

And therefore, I say, we honour all the more the man who can and does rise superior to his surroundings. Character, indeed, and not mere accidental and adventitious birth and rank—though these we do not despise in any fitting person—should claim and command our esteem and admiration. Bad advice given in youth, and bad habits then formed, are always the worst to eradicate; and when a man in after-life sloughs them off, as a lizard sloughs off its last season's skin, and emerges into a healthier life, we feel that such a man deserves to be honoured above his fellows. We have some such men amongst the high aristocratic class—men of

Bad habits
difficult to
eradicate.

noble souls and generous instincts, and we hold them in just regard.

An alliance
with the
Conservatives.

What was the text and burden of the speeches on Tuesday night? Just the old story, which we had hoped might have been modified by growing experience. It was that the Dissentients are still as bitterly opposed as ever to granting a statutory Parliament to Ireland for the management of her home affairs, and that they have entered into an alliance with the Conservative party to thwart any designs in that direction. What is this party with which this unholy alliance has been made? It is what was, and is, the Tory party. It is a party which, throughout its whole history, has striven to abridge the liberties of the people. It is and has been a party of self-seekers. It starved the bodies of the people by laws limiting the quantity of their food, and their minds by the imposition and the maintenance of the taxes on knowledge; it tried to prevent the spread of primary education amongst the masses; it kept the doors of our Universities for the higher education closed against all but a special and exclusive class till they were forced open by a power which could no longer be resisted. What would have been our position as a country to-day if that party had had the working of its will?

The Tory party.

There would have been no England worth mentioning, and other nations would have suffered for want of the great example we have been able to set before them. This is the party with whom an alliance has been entered into by renegade Liberals for what they call the preservation of the Union, which is not threatened; though barely twelve months have elapsed since the leaders of that same party were coquetting with the Irish leaders with regard to the granting of self-government, which, along with the Dissenters, they deny to the Irish to-day. That surely is an alliance in which Lord Hartington cannot feel any just pride. And what is the purpose of this alliance? It is to try and perpetuate a union which never has been a union in any true sense of the term. This so-called union, as we know, was consummated by methods the vilest and most abhorrent that can be conceived, and in spite, too, of the indignant protestations of the best statesmen of the time, both in England and Ireland. It is a union which the Irish have never acknowledged as binding upon their hearts and consciences. It is a pretended union, a make-believe union, that is only sustained at this hour, after 86 years of unceasing agitation, by an army of 40,000 men and at a cost of several millions of money annually. Is

The so-called
Union.

Cost of the so-
called Union.

that a union in which we can feel any kind of satisfaction? Is it not rather a bastard union, buttressed mainly by landlords and interested hangers-on of Governmental power and place? Now, it is desirable on every account to know and tell the truth about this union. It must be remembered, further, that it was not a pretended union only, but one accompanied by misgovernment. Possibly, if the country had been governed more according to Irish ideas, had the Government been less alien in character, the results might have been different to-day. But bad as the union, with misgovernment to embitter it, has been in its effect on Ireland, there is no demand now for its repeal. What the leaders of the Irish people ask for, and what Mr. Gladstone has proposed, and the great majority of the Liberal party has endorsed, is a statutory Parliament in Dublin, for the management of purely Irish domestic affairs, along with continued and real union with this country. With what show of reason can we object to that? Ireland would still be under the British Crown; her imperial interests would be our own. I yield to no man in my aversion to admit the thought of separation, and if any such idea has ever been entertained or expressed by any of the Irish leaders, it may well be that the language used was that of desperation

A bastard union

Real union.

Separation
deprecated.

under the pressure of unredressed grievances, and with no prospect of a better condition of things. It is said, however, that such a measure would lead to separation. Now, although I look upon that as a chimera of weak minds, and have no fear of anything of the kind, seeing that Irishmen are not fools, yet I say, in answer to it, that we should still have our remedy in case of any such movement. But take an example from history. When Grattan's Parliament, or what is known as Grattan's Parliament, was granted to Ireland in 1782, what effect had that great concession by England on the minds and hearts of the Irish people? Did they turn to reviling and upbraiding this country for past wrongs inflicted upon them? On the contrary, they were drawn towards England with the strongest cords of sympathy and affection. The generosity of the warm Irish nature overflowed towards their English brethren, and to express their high sense of gratitude the Irish Parliament immediately voted £100,000, and 20,000 seamen to the British navy. How different has been the condition of things since the time when by fraud and corruption and force that Parliament was dissolved and the union of 1800 accomplished? The seeds of hate and aversion were then implanted

Grattan's
Parliament.

Its high sense of
gratitude.

Discontent and
agrarian crime.

in the Irish breast, and to-day, as I have said, it requires an army, at a cost of millions annually, not to kill Irish patriotic aspiration—for that is indestructible—but to keep it within manageable bounds. Owing to these circumstances, and to the wretched land laws that were in existence till Mr. Gladstone took their reformation in hand, there is an almost unbroken record during the past eighty-six years, of discontent, and disloyalty, and agrarian crime in Ireland. And this state of things will continue, depend upon that, in a less or greater degree, in spite of every effort on our part to prevent it, under existing conditions. The seasons may be good or bad for the agriculturists; the material prosperity of the country may ebb and flow, but the aspirations for Home Government will never be blotted out from the Irish breast and mind. The justification urged for the misdeeds wrought in Ireland by the consistently cruel and blinded action of rulers a century ago was just that of which the speeches of Dissident Liberals is to-day the reverberation. Irishmen could not be trusted to manage their own domestic affairs. It is consolatory to know, however, that the attempt to stifle the aspirations of a people, though it may be fierce and even sustained for a time, cannot possibly succeed under present

political conditions in this country. Lord Hartington professes to be opposed to Home Rule in any shape or form. He is retrograding from his previous declaration that he was willing to grant a considerable measure of self-government to Ireland. But whether he objects to Home Rule or not, it is not an objection that prevails among either Dissentients or Tories generally. Notwithstanding their present attitude, there is a feeling existent amongst them that self-government in one form or another must be the ultimate solution of the difficulty. Lord Hartington at the present moment is the chief obstacle in the way of a settlement of the question, and his responsibility under the circumstances is greater than he appears to realise.

Lord Hartington
retrograding.

It is a mystery to me how men calling themselves Liberals can support the present Government—a Government that seems, from all present appearances, determined to fill up the measure of its disgrace in connection with Ireland. There is a blind madness about the action of the Government in their removal of Sir Robert Hamilton. It is as though they were determined to leave no official friend to that country within its green domain. There is a brutal deliberation—or want of deliberation—

Sir Robert
Hamilton and
his removal.

The pathos of
the story.

Poor Red Riding
Hood.

about the whole business that makes the blood run cold. This act, to my thinking, will yet, and soon, be the destruction of the Government. Whom the gods intend to destroy they first make mad. But the pathos of the story exceeds even its brutality. Get the tried friend of Ireland out of the way at any cost; remove the protector, that we may at our leisure gulp down the victim. In earlier historical times his removal would have been drastic and inexpensive; but in these days of higher civilisation we transport the offender to Van Diemen's Land, and provide him a handsome salary. The principle is the same: we at all costs remove the obstacle to our set purposes. Never mind, it is well that the episode should have occurred. It has once more opened our eyes to the depth of hate to Ireland that abides in the Tory breast. It is one more pathetic chapter added to the sorrowful history of that country. Poor Red Riding Hood! The wolf is on your track.

SPEECH AT HUDDERSFIELD,

SATURDAY, DEC. 18TH, 1886.

*Delivered in Lockwood Mechanics' Institution,
Huddersfield.*

It affords me pleasure to stand on this platform with your honoured representative in

Parliament, Mr. Summers, and along with you to offer him our congratulations on the splendid and successful fight which he made in Huddersfield at the last election. The contest was one which excited no little interest throughout the country. The disadvantages under which he fought your battle were such as might well have daunted a less able and courageous man, and your triumph, therefore, in the victory which he with your votes and willing assistance achieved, is such as to justify a good deal of rejoicing on your part. I sincerely hope that the connection of Mr. Summers with your borough, which has begun so auspiciously, may long continue, and that you may have growing reason, as I feel assured you will have, to be proud of your representative. It would be paying a poor compliment to the splendid and earnest audience that I see before me to suggest that any poor words of mine are needed to commend to you the great principles which as Liberals we profess and hold. The very fact that you have embraced these principles, and that you are anxiously and nervously desirous of seeing them prevail amongst the community, is a guarantee of the possession of a breadth of political knowledge which does not require any stimulant to maintain or strengthen its growth. To hold

The
Huddersfield
election.

A breadth of
political
knowledge.

Scurrilous
diatribes.

Liberal views presupposes an amount of intelligent thought which it is not an absolute necessity our opponents, the Tories, should possess. Indeed, when we read the scurrilous diatribes that appear in the newspaper press of that party, when we notice the strength of the assertions of that press and the weakness and often the dishonesty of the arguments employed, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that an intelligent acquaintance either with history or politics would be a positive disqualification to anyone desiring to join the ranks of the party. But we have always young men growing up in our midst, and although they have the advantage of us in youth and in the hope of a longer career before them, we have the advantage of them in experience and in a closer personal acquaintance with the circumstances which have contributed to the greatness and prosperity of our country. It is well, therefore, that we should have our political clubs, and hold our political gatherings, and hold them often, for the purpose of enunciating and disseminating those truths and principles which are dear to us as Liberals.

Dissemination
of Liberal
principles
advocated.

Now what are those principles? Broadly and briefly stated, they are such as put into practice would promote the greatest material happiness of the greatest number; and at the same time

they would do no actual injustice to any single individual. It does not follow that in carrying out these great objects we are all equally advanced in our opinions—all equally agreed as to the measures to be adopted for achieving them. Hence differences of view, less or more, will always exist among us, and at times our relations to each other will be strained, and such as to weaken our influence as a party. But although this is at times a source of weakness, it is also eventually a great source of strength. It leads to earnest and searching thought and discussion. It prevents the clear stream of thought in our minds from stagnating into a rank and unwholesome pool. We argue and discuss our points of difference till we have succeeded in threshing out the golden grain from the chaff; and if, when this is done, some of our friends prefer the chaff, they are welcome to their opinions, and we are resigned to part company with them. Truth, however, is stronger than error, even when its adherents are fewer in number. Time, too, is always on its side, and it gradually but surely draws recruits into its ranks, until finally it achieves a great victory. Such is the story of all our Liberal triumphs in the past, and therefore, in the midst of discouragements, we pursue our course undismayed, having faith in the lessons which are taught us by our past history.

Value of
discussion.

The lessons of
history.

"The
Constitutional
Party."

Blots in our
Constitution.

Our opponents, the Tories, assume a variety of names as occasion serves their whims or convenience. But there is one name which, when I hear them apply it to themselves, always causes me amusement as well as considerable satisfaction. They say sometimes that they are "The Constitutional Party." Now, that I take to be a testimonial—perhaps an unconscious testimonial—to the value of our work as Liberals. I, for one, am glad that they are willing to swear by our glorious Constitution, for all that it contains of what is really good and glorious is the handiwork of Liberal activity and energy in the past. There are still various blots in our Constitution which it is our aim to eradicate, and which we hope to eradicate in the coming future; and it is an encouragement to us to think that our Tory friends will, after this has been accomplished, join with us, as they always do, in praise of our glorious Constitution. Unfortunately, they never lend a helping hand to the making of that Constitution either good or glorious. They have, as a party, stood in the way of progress of almost every kind—they have resisted advancement till they have found resistance of no avail, and have had finally to bow to the inexorable logic of events. Most of us know, as a matter of personal knowledge and

experience—for we have fought against them as soldiers in the Liberal ranks—that they have been the defenders of nearly every abuse which has been reformed during our lifetime, and the records of the past tell us that their political character has always been much the same.

Defenders of
abuses.

I would gladly have dealt with the all-important questions of Land reform, Religious equality, and the reform of the House of Lords, had time and my strength permitted. There is ample scope within the four corners of each of these subjects for Liberal activity and exertion, and at no distant day they will engross our attention. But the Irish question looms darkly in front of us to the exclusion of almost every other. Until this is satisfactorily settled and out of the way, I see but little prospect of other pressing reforms being taken in hand, and, indeed, it is not desirable that this should longer be left in abeyance. It is our greatest source of weakness as a people and as an Empire, that this festering sore should longer remain unhealed. Now, it is impossible, in the course of a single address, to deal with all the various objections that are urged against the granting of a statutory Parliament to Ireland for the control of the purely domestic affairs of that nation. I will at present deal with only one phase of the

The Irish
Question.

The Catholic
religion.

question. There are some good people—well-meaning, religious people, good Liberals on every other subject—who look with a degree of apprehension on this Irish question. They have strong sympathy for Ireland in the midst of her sorrows, and the wretched condition of her poorer inhabitants, caused largely by the neglect and injustice to which the country has been so long subjected, and they recognise the reasonableness of the demand of Irishmen to be allowed the right of self-government; but they are prejudiced against the Catholic religion, which is professed by the majority of the inhabitants of that country, and they fear lest, if Home Rule were granted, the power of the priest would be in the ascendant in the country, and would be exercised to the detriment and possible persecution of the Protestant minority. Now, I hold that this is a narrow and mistaken view to take. It arises, as I believe, from a limited knowledge of human nature and a want of acquaintance with the lessons that are taught us by history. Such views, also, are due to the teachings of men who, some of them with the worst motives, try to compass their own mean, selfish ends by appealing to the lowest passions and prejudices of those who listen to them. I am not in the least surprised that the baser Tory politicians

should on all suitable occasions try to fan this flame of religious animosity. We do not wonder that men of the stamp of Lord Randolph Churchill, with his numerous admirers and imitators in the Tory camp, should make use of such a base weapon to serve their party purpose and win a brief lease of power. We have a passing regret, however, when a man like Lord Iddesleigh descends to employ the same weapon. But when a man who professes to stand in the fore-front of the Liberal ranks—one who ought to know better—when Mr. Chamberlain, for example, condescends to stoop to such an unworthy argument in order to compass the defeat of our leader, no words that we can use are half strong enough to mark our abhorrence of his language and his actions. It will be an evil day for the country and the Empire when the majority of the Liberal party refuses to advocate justice and to do justice for fear of the consequences. But, as a matter of experience, we know that amongst a free and self-governed people, whatever their religious belief, be it Protestant or Catholic, the feeling of religious animosity gradually vanishes in the light of the higher lessons, and the broader views, and the nobler ambitions that are thenceforward their heritage. Persecution and class privilege and

Religious
animosity,

Effects of self-
government.

Priestcraft.

Priestcraft in
England.

caste are always associated together. That is one of the lessons that history enforces in a hundred examples; and there is no stronger proof of this than is furnished in the history of our own country. When the people have a voice in the making of the laws, and, through their representatives, in the election of the Executive, religious bigotry begins to pale its ineffectual fires, and finally, except in narrow minds, ceases to exert its evil influence. We may point to the recent political history of the kingdom of Italy as one of the most striking examples of the truth of what I state. Priestcraft—and when I make use of the word I do not limit its application to the priests of any single or particular faith, neither do I apply it to the godly men who fulfil the true functions of the sacred calling. Priestcraft is only tolerated where superstition and gross ignorance prevail, and these cannot long exist in the minds of a people who are either free, or who have aspirations to self-government. I make bold to say that there is less display of priestcraft in Ireland to-day than there has been in the agricultural counties of England within the last generation. True, the Irish people cling to their religion, and why should they not? It has been their solace in the midst of their sorrows and their trials.

The poor priest in their remote and landlord-forsaken parishes and districts has been their kind and helpful friend. He has suffered poverty and hardship like themselves, and the natural feelings of reverence and regard of Irishmen have turned towards him, and twined round him, and clung to him, like the ivy to the oak. A man who suffers and at the same time strives to alleviate sorrow and distress is a true priest, a true minister of the gospel of Christ, and is far removed from the tyranny which it is the object of priestcraft—whether Catholic or Protestant—to exercise. We need to clear our minds of this cant of religious animosity, and especially as it applies to Ireland and Irishmen: the facts, I contend, are all against our harbouring fear and distrust of this kind. Wedded though the majority of the people are to the faith of their fathers, they have never allowed any superstitious reverence for it to stand in the way of their affection and love for the leaders who have stood up as the exponents of their national aspirations. It is a strange commentary on the shameful attempts that are made to embitter the religious feelings of the community, to recall the fact that all the great leaders of the Irish people, with one single exception, have been of the Protestant faith. Let us rehearse the names

The true priest.

Irish leaders.

of those leaders. We have Dean Swift, Molyneux, Lucas, Henry Grattan, Flood, Charlemont, Tone, Emmett, Mitchell, Smith O'Brien, Thomas Davies, and, in our own time, Isaac Butt and Mr. Parnell. From the days of Dean Swift down to the present, the people of Ireland have only had one leader who was a Roman Catholic—Daniel O'Connell. There is a want of generosity and fair dealing on this phase of the Irish question on the part of those who would thus stir up strife amongst a people on account of their religious opinions. If he who puts forward the argument is insincere in his conduct, then the argument he uses is the most dastardly that can be employed. His principles are rotten, I care not what is the name by which they are called. If he is sincere in his argument, believing it to be true, he is a bigot and consequently one whose teaching is to be avoided. In either case he shall never be leader of mine. I should feel disgraced in fighting under his banner. But we shall not be called on to do so, my friends. There is light growing and spreading amongst us on this and other subjects, and the mists of imperfect knowledge which have enveloped us in damp and unwholesome folds are gradually but surely passing away. Our hope is centred in the people. It is to them that we now appeal

Religious
bigotry.

and shall have to appeal in the last resort. They will be the final arbiters who will decide the settlement of this question of justice to Ireland. Its solution will be the key to the solution of much that lies behind it. It is in vain to appeal to the territorial magnates who met together in conclave in the Metropolis a fortnight ago. That mutual admiration and coercion meeting will fail of its object. The tinsel and the glitter of the show were gorgeous, but these are materials that will neither stand hard wear nor washing. I doubt whether even the members of the Tory government, in their inmost heart, estimate very highly the help which the Dissentients are able to give them.

Justice to
Ireland

There is a lack of dignity about the present Government which is not good to witness. We read in the newspapers, time after time, of Lord Salisbury calling at Devonshire House to take counsel with Lord Hartington. On the eve of a Cabinet meeting he is described as having been in consultation with his lordship. Now, I cannot conceive of anything more humiliating in a Prime Minister than to have to go and consult an outsider, however distinguished, as to the lines on which his policy should be formed. It is undignified, and, to my unsophisticated mind, it seems almost unconstitutional; certainly it is

A humiliating
policy.

Power without
responsibility.

undignified—undignified on the part of the Premier and on the part of Lord Hartington. If the power, as is said, is really in Lord Hartington's hands, then it seems as though it is scarcely right that he should escape the responsibility. If the power is not in reality in the hands of Lord Salisbury, it is humiliating that a man should be found to hold such high office and wield but the semblance of power whilst he takes all the responsibility. There is something out of gear somewhere. It is one of those puzzles that would have exercised the mind of Lord Dundreary to analyse and understand. Taking the position all round, it is, as I have said, undignified and humiliating, not only for the chief actors concerned but for the country at large. We all feel that we share in the degradation. The veriest costermonger would despise the show of power and authority on such terms. Would Mr. Gladstone ever have stooped to such an undignified position? I think not. He has a soul above it; and his attitude to-day far transcends in dignity that of any political leader in either of the opposite camps. There is a baldness about their ideas of what constitutes statesmanship which is scarcely surpassed by those of a "cheap jack" at a country fair. The political education of the people is ripening

Responsibility
without power.

whilst they are struggling in the ruts of a discredited policy. It is in vain that a wiser judgment has pointed out the better path of progress.

Unless we are willing to govern Ireland in accordance with the expressed will of the vast majority of her own people—that is, through their own statutory Parliament, managing and controlling their own domestic affairs—unless we are willing to do that, we shall be compelled to govern her as a Crown colony, by the power of the sword. There is no escape from this. One or the other is inevitable. There is no alternative, and it is not to the credit of English statesmanship to ignore the inevitable conclusion. We must not blow hot and cold with the same breath. Better that we had never enfranchised the masses than attempt to make a travesty of representation. Mr. Gladstone, with great and wise foresight, has recognised this, and at the risk of being misunderstood by his friends, and misrepresented by his enemies, he has dared to listen to the voice of Ireland. Had he, at his great age, studied his own bodily ease and rest, had he sought mere personal gratification, as his enemies and detractors declare, Mr. Gladstone might have turned a deaf ear to Irish grievances, and gone on in the old beaten track of Irish

The only
alternative.

Mr. Gladstone's
action.

neglect, tempered by coercion. But what to meaner spirits would only have been a natural course would to him have been a shirking of duty, and he chose the more difficult road of honour and sacrifice. Let us forbear, then, to listen to the suggestions and whisperings of evil tongues, who say that it was mere personal ambition on the part of Mr. Gladstone which led him to espouse the cause of Ireland. The facts are all against such an unworthy conclusion.

Appeal for
justice to Ireland

Now, I appeal to you electors—to you working men electors especially—to rise to the height of this great occasion for doing justice, of redeeming a nation from the sorrows that have encompassed it, like its own melancholy ocean, for so many generations. That the irresponsible despot of some foreign state should dominate the people is bad enough in all conscience, but that the democracy of England, who have emerged into freedom after long struggling, should try to crush the aspirations of a nation who ask only for justice, would be the cruelest of wrongs. If I could think it possible, I should begin to despair of human nature. Happily, it is not possible. The instincts of the people are wider and healthier than the boasted wisdom of many who aspire to be their governors. Let us trust the foresight, the transparent honesty of

purpose, and the brave humanity of a wise statesman; let us follow the safe guidance, and imitate the noble patriotism of a great leader. Not a man of his detractors shall be allowed to filch the mantle from the shoulders of our Elijah, and when the time comes—which we hope and pray may be long deferred—that Elijah has gone to his rest, the man we shall choose to wear it shall be a noble and worthy successor.

Elijah's mantle.

SPEECH AT HUDDERSFIELD,

SATURDAY, DEC. 18TH, 1886.

Delivered in Salem New Connexion Sunday School, Berry Brow, Huddersfield.

It is no small satisfaction to me to have the privilege of attending your meeting this evening, and witnessing the enthusiasm which marks your reception of your honourable member, Mr. Summers. There is a solidity, and staunchness, and determination, about Yorkshire Liberalism that does one good to see. It is like a draught of upland air to a man accustomed to breathe the fog-laden atmosphere of the valley. I can enter into your feelings, and am readily fired by your enthusiasm, seeing that I am part Yorkshire myself—my maternal grandfather having been

Huddersfield
and Mr.
Summers.

A great record.

a Yorkshireman. A man's political faith should have a well-grounded and substantial basis to rest upon, and it should not be easily disturbed or shaken by the storms of faction, even if they attain hurricane violence, which blow across the plains of public and national life. Your Liberalism is of that strong, nervous type. Huddersfield has, I believe, given an unwavering support for more than half a century to the cause of progress. This is a great record. It is a record in which a man and a party may feel just pride and satisfaction. The knowledge of it should stimulate your determination to maintain your local political life and organisation at the same high level. There is much to give you encouragement in your resolve in this direction. In your present member, Mr. Summers, you have a young and vigorous and strong representative who has already made his mark in Parliamentary life; and who, as I believe, is destined to take a prominent and distinguished place amongst our legislators. He is as robust in his Liberalism as yourselves—cool and clear-headed and dependable in his political views, and fearless in giving expression to them. I hope he may long continue to enjoy your confidence, and represent the political opinions of the majority in this important borough. With this consummation in

view, I hope you will each feel it to be a duty incumbent upon you to promote by all legitimate means the spread of Liberal opinions and Liberal principles amongst the electors. Working men, as a rule, are good political teachers. They have great influence amongst their fellows, and their opportunities are immense. Take up the task each of you. Do not rest content with only an occasional effort at such times and meetings as the present. Work with a will, and be determined that you will do something, each of you personally, to extend a knowledge of the principles that have done so much for the country, and for her working millions in particular.

Working men
good political
teachers.

If there is one class more than another that should feel grateful to the men who held Liberal opinions in the past, and strove for the realisation of those opinions in legislative work, it is the working class of our country. Not that the true Liberal has ever aimed at class legislation. It has been the aim, and indeed the immediate purpose and effect, of all Liberal legislation to benefit the people, the whole people, high and low, rich and poor. As Liberals we know no exclusive class, and no special interests. This is the true spirit in which to work. Even our opponents, the Conservatives, are the recipients of the benefits of our labours and our exertions,

Liberal
legislation.

The true spirit.

Toryism.

whether they acknowledge and feel grateful for them or not. Toryism as a principle, if it is a principle, can never beget enthusiasm for its own sake, or for what it accomplishes. It is only when a Conservative Government adopts, or professes to adopt, Liberal measures and a Liberal policy that anything like enthusiasm is awakened in the ranks of the party. That apparently is the tendency of their policy—thanks to Lord Randolph Churchill, the main-spring of their action—at the present juncture, on almost every question of the hour except that question of Ireland. But it will be ample time to trust even such a Democrat, or professed Democrat, as his lordship, when we find that he performs that which will entitle him to claim our trust. “Fine words butter no parsnips,” so says that wary north-country proverb, and we will live in hope without committing ourselves. There are right-hand and left-hand gifts, and, as you well know, our friends the Tories have a left-handed way of doing even the right thing. Often we find, too, that what they give with one hand they take back with the other.

“Fine words
butter no
parsnips.”

I much fear that the glowing programme of reforms announced at Dartford will turn out a will-o'-the-wisp, which will vanish when the daylight of actual legislation is let in upon it.

There was too much of the market doctor's catalogue of wares about the whole business to awaken anything but distrust; and even if we could place confidence in its author there are his colleagues in the Cabinet and out of it who will want to have their snip out of the Chancellor's democratic broadcloth. The cabbage of these political tailors, I suspect, will be greater than will allow of a respectable suit being made out of the fragment of broadcloth that is left. Already, indeed, the programme has been whittled down by the Prime Minister till but a skeleton of the portly presence remains.

On the great questions of Land Reform, County Government, Religious Equality, and Reform of the House of Lords, I place no confidence whatever in either the ability of the Tories to deal with them as they ought to be dealt with, or in their good intentions. They are too much concerned, personally, in the maintenance of the existing condition of things to touch these with anything but a gloved hand. They will let the most of these great questions severely alone, depend upon that. It will need an infusion of real democratic blood into the Cabinet that intends to deal with them in earnest. And they will all have to be taken in hand before very long. There are gross anomalies associated with

Land Law
reform.

each of these subjects which the ever-growing intelligence of our people will determine ere long to remedy. These great questions should engage the thoughtful and earnest attention of all who love their country, and desire to see its people prosperous and happy. A thorough reform of the Land Laws, as Mr. Cobden pointed out years ago, would issue in as great, if not greater, benefits than those we have experienced through Free Trade. In my opinion, it would go far also to solve the terrible question of how best to mitigate the poverty of our large towns. From every point of view the Land Question should be taken up in a determined and intelligent spirit by the people. The stereotyped idea of the great territorial magnates is, that the land of the country, and the minerals in the bowels of the earth, are their own peculiar birthright. This subject of mineral ownership, and the claims of mineral royalties, should be looked into with a view to changing the system. The minerals are a part, and a very important part, of the capital of the country. These minerals must necessarily be got and utilised, but, at least, let their raw value as minerals, or the right to get them, accrue to the benefit of the whole people, and not to that of the few. Instead of their being at present the portion of all, we actually

Mineral
Royalties.

allow their possessors to make them a scourge for our backs. By these claims of ownership, and the exorbitant charges by way of "royalties," Royalties. trade is hampered or driven out of the country. In Belgium and other countries they manage these things better. There the minerals are the property of the State, and the moderate winning rental which is charged is employed for the benefit of all the inhabitants. It is high time that this portion of the capital of the country, which was never created by any individual, or set of individuals—it is high time that we put a stop to its being eaten up by the favoured few.

Take again the question of Church patronage and control by the State. This connection of Church and State is the remnant of a system Church and State. which is doomed to pass away. As it exists in England to-day it is only sacerdotal power with the fangs extracted. It is a farce enacted to please one-half the people and offend the other half. Instead of being an aid to religion in any shape or form it is a hindrance. Nay, if it were not for the counteracting and opposing forces, stronger than itself, which have tethered this wretched pagan with a gradually shortening chain, it would drag humanity down and back into the clutches of its twin sisters—superstition

The logical
outcome of the
system.

and persecution. True religion will never cover the land as the waters cover the sea until this obstacle to its universality is swept out of the way. The fact that there are Nonconformists, and especially that they are so numerous, is one of the strongest arguments against the connection of the Church and the State. If it is right that the State should recognise a certain church or sect, it follows as a logical sequence that it is also the duty of the State to compel conformity to that particular church or sect. That was what was really attempted to be done in the days of red-handed persecution; and I say that it is the logical outcome of the system. To-day its existence is as much of an absurdity as a falsely-reasoned theorem in Euclid. But then, bless your heart, the salary of a bishop or the income from a fat living will reconcile some men of even academic wisdom to much that is absurd and incongruous as well as flagrantly unjust. In these days of enlightenment, however, and now that freedom has "broadened down" upon the country, the perpetuation and much longer endurance of such injustice is impossible, for in a free country the special patronage of a Church by the State is doomed. It is only a question of time as to how long it will be allowed to exist. The issues may be obscured by a multitude of

words, and by the play of clever and interested men—themselves deluded, many of them, no doubt—upon the superstitious strings of our human nature; but in spite of their sophistries, State-Churchism is an anachronism that cannot long survive. An anachronism

Let us turn to the Irish Question. On this our present rulers are clearly without the shadow of a policy, excepting the old exploded idea of resolute government. They are dominated by a phrase; but even were it otherwise, it is a wretched fallacy, which, in its application, involves an increase in the number of bayonets and repressive measures, and even these will not suffice to bring peace to a distracted land. Dominated by a phrase.

In the resort to such unwholesome and desperate measures, they are urged on by the anonymous and irresponsible writers in the *Times* and other Tory newspapers. If ever one is inclined or tempted to entertain a doubt of the unmixed benefits of a free press, it is when we read the unscrupulous language that is employed by these writers— The Tory Press.

Day in, day out, from morn till night
 You can hear their bellows roar;
 You can see the hissing sparks that fly
 Like chaff [exceedingly like chaff] from a
 threshing floor.

It takes all our fortitude, all our politics, and all

our religion to struggle and fight against these baleful influences and counteract them. But we need not despair. Justice and Truth will be the victors in the end.

SPEECH AT MOORSIDE, SWINTON,
MONDAY, JANUARY 24TH, 1887.

Delivered in the British Schoolroom, Moorside.

Physical and
political fogs.

Mr. Newbigging said: The new year on which we have but recently entered began its career in fogs, both in the physical and political world. The physical atmosphere has cleared, but I cannot make the same observation of the political. True, the majority of the great Liberal party to which we are proud to belong, has suffered no eclipse either in its views or in the fixed purposes which, under God's help, it is determined to achieve. We have been standing as it were on an eminence, high uplifted above the mist and fog, and have witnessed with an amused interest the struggles and writhings of the motley conglomeration of foes and false friends in their mist-enshrouded camp down below in the valley. But even under conditions the most favourable, a kind of hazy indistinctness hovers about Tory politics, which is the cause

Tory politics.

of a good deal of floundering in the party. That is their case at the present juncture. They pose as the defenders of the Constitution—a Constitution, let me remind you, which, in all that is worthy of defence, is the work of Liberal builders in the years gone by. The only defence, however, which they ever attempt is the defence of the rotten and crumbling portions of the edifice that need pulling down and reconstructing, so that they shall cease to endanger and jeopardise the liberties and lives of the people. It is against such unwholesome and deadly spots in the Constitution that our efforts at amelioration are directed, but invariably in any attempt to amend, them, we are confronted with the opposition of the alarmed mob of reactionists, whose only title to existence is that it shall hinder and obstruct. The methods of licensed wrong in dealing with Irishmen, and with the poor Crofters in the Highlands and islands of Scotland, are a standing disgrace to a civilised country, and they are one glaring example of the rotten parts of our Constitutional system which our opponents are displaying such a heroic determination to defend; and, on the other hand, these are the very portions that we Liberals are just as resolutely determined shall be rased to the very foundations. The result will be what it has ever been before—

The
Constitution.

The alarmed
mob of
reactionists.

we shall continue the struggle till victory crowns our efforts.

Leading
politicians.

Let me give you my views on some of the leading men who at present stand out prominently against the political horizon. I hear some of our Liberal friends express the opinion, with a kind of elation in their voice, that Lord Randolph Churchill will yet prove himself to be a Radical, and will eventually join our party. I confess that I scarcely share either their beliefs or their hopes in this respect. The late embryo Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons has a certain contempt for the methods of his party, but he lacks the self-denying spirit which is essential in the earnest political truth-seeker. I have not been unobserving of his career, and throughout its whole course I have failed to find in it any indication of the substantial qualities which constitute greatness. There is cleverness, audacity, unscrupulousness in abundance, and a kind of vulgar brilliancy about him, well calculated to dazzle and attract his special followers and admirers; but in the sterling gifts of a great mind, in the commanding qualities of statesmanship, he is lamentably wanting. Amongst the Lilliputians of his party he is somewhat of a giant it is true, but he is a giant only by contrast.

Lord Randolph
Churchill.

A giant among
Lilliputians.

Imagine the pigmy intellectual stature of the man alongside the gladiators of the Liberal army! No, no, my friends! this man—and this is one of his saving excellencies—has taken his own measure, and knows exactly where he can show to conspicuous advantage. I hear one of my audience whisper the suggestion that perhaps, after all, I may be mistaken in my estimate of his lordship. Well, the wisest of us is not infallible. He may yet deceive the shrewdest character-reader, and prove himself to be the prophet's worthy successor; but at present he does not appear to have realised the dictum of his dead chief, that patience is the leading virtue, and that everything comes to the man who will wait. His essay as leader and in the Exchequer Office was nipped in the bud. One is reminded by it of those flashy historical books that are brought out in monthly parts, and after you have taken a few of the said parts there comes a sudden stop to the supply. The publisher or the author has failed in his engagements, and the story is broken off just when it is becoming interesting. No, I cannot see the promise of greatness in his conduct so far as it went. His aspirations after economy were dashed with haste and indiscretion. Vaulting ambition, rather than economy and reform, appears to me

Patience,
leading virtue.

A crucial
moment for the
Prime Minister.

Icarus.

Lord Iddesleigh.

to be the mainspring of his action. Radical as I am, economist as I am, I have more sympathy for his stolid opponents in the Cabinet than for him. I am glad that Lord Salisbury has stood firm for once. It was a crucial moment for the Prime Minister when his sulky lieutenant threatened resignation unless his imperious demands were complied with. For the Premier to have yielded would have been to place his neck under the heel of a tyrant. Instead of *primus*, *secundus* would have been his name. No, Lord Randolph Churchill is another Icarus, and he has met a similar fate: his wings were made of wax, and they have melted on his soaring too near the sun.

The change which has come over the *personnel* and prospects of the Conservative Government, owing to the resignation of Lord Randolph Churchill, is like the transformation scene of a pantomime. There has been much of broad farce about the whole business, and it occurred at a most seasonable time. What a practical joker this Churchill must be! Unfortunately it culminated in the pathetic and almost tragic death of Lord Iddesleigh, the most respected and the most ill-used statesman in the Conservative ranks. Whether the capture of Mr. Goschen by the Tory Government—this *marriage*

de convenance—will be of advantage to the party remains to be seen. I have grave doubts on the subject. Mr. Goschen is an impracticable politician, and more likely than not he will turn out a white elephant on their hands. As a destructive critic he excels, but he has never exhibited the possession of the higher gifts of statesmanship—and this, too, not for lack of opportunity but because of an instinctive dread of the people and popular liberty. Notwithstanding his conspicuous abilities as an opponent, as a statesman he is a conspicuous failure. His record as a legislator is as blank as the face of the “Criterion” head waiter. In his various speeches you will find Liberal doctrines of all kinds whittled away to a vanishing point; at the outset his speeches promise much in the way of illumination, but they go blank out and leave you in utter darkness. They are as disappointing in this respect as a damp or damaged piece of firework; none of his rockets ever scintillate into stars. It is rarely that he exhausts an argument, but when he perchance ventures to do so, he takes care not to apply the moral. Mr. Goschen is an adept at beating about the bush, and is careful not to commit himself. We wish the Tory party joy of their very questionable New Year’s gift. But whether he proves a

Mr. Goschen.

A questionable
New Year’s gift.

desirable acquisition or not to the Tories, the Liberal party may well be justified in viewing with equanimity his withdrawal from their ranks. So far as any sympathy with the people is concerned, his heart is as dry and dusty as the apples of Gomorrah. Much of his reputation as an opponent even is due to the circumstance that his opposition has constantly been exerted from the Liberal side of the House, and against the measures of the party among whom he has sat as a professed adherent. That kind of opposition always brings a man notoriety—of credit we will say nothing—and it is particularly damaging to the colleagues with whom for the time being he claims kinship. Such men are like witnesses called for the defence, who invariably give evidence for the prosecution. Against an outside opponent who confronts us fairly and squarely we are able to stand on our guard and parry his thrusts however furious the onslaught; but an attack from behind, and by a pretended friend, is always disconcerting. The Tories show their weakness in hailing as a god-send the accession of this so-called Unionist to the Cabinet, not certainly because he is simply what is called a Unionist—nothing of the kind, but because he is a Tory like themselves. But what must be the humiliating position of the

Attacks from
behind.

Conservative Cabinet, the members of which, with such exuberance of joy, welcome this adherent into their circle! Humiliation is scarcely the word. It is or ought to be felt as a degradation to every man in the Government. The country so feels it, and their own party feel it, whether Ministers do or not. True, they have lost a prominent coadjutor in Lord Randolph Churchill; but a plucky Prime Minister, instead of casting his eyes to the ends of the earth, would have been ready to declare, and would have declared, that amongst the ranks of his followers there remained "a hundred good as he." After all, the Premier ought to be the best judge of his men and the situation. Such being the case, it must be admitted that "the great Conservative party" is in sorry straits when they stretch longing arms to the Liberal Unionists for help. You here, in Swinton, would call that football team both weak and contemptible that appealed for assistance to outsiders whilst so many of their own set were standing around with abashed and half contemptuous looks. The chivalric Tory has become a thing of the past. He is as extinct as the dodo.

Humiliation
and degradation

Stretching
longing arms.

The attitude of Lord Hartington is less satisfactory than that of any other prominent

Lord
Hartington.

A grateful
dream.

Playing a
perilous game.

politician of the hour. We took him to be a Liberal; we hope he is a Liberal. True, he has always been a laggard in the ranks, and on occasions has proved himself to be a drag on the revolving wheels of progress; nevertheless, we trusted and were proud of him, hoping ever for better things. We even cherished the grateful dream of seeing him by-and-by assume the premiership of the country—the premiership of the Liberal party, in worthy succession to our great and revered leader, Mr. Gladstone. I fear that few of us cherish any such hope now. The idea of such a thing, in presence of recent events, is fast becoming repugnant to our moral sense. Our vision apparently was not a waking reality—it was only a dream which the broad daylight of political events has dissolved. In his present action, Lord Hartington is like the speculator in stocks who is playing a perilous game, not with his own money, but with the money and credit of the firm by whom he is employed. That firm is the Liberal party. They have trusted him with the uncounted gold which he now employs to bolster up the flash notes of an incompetent and discredited Ministry. He and they are credulous enough to imagine that they can foist these notes upon us, and that we shall accept

them believing them to be genuine, and that there is uncoined bullion in the Tory bank as guarantee for the value stamped upon their face. We shall do nothing of the kind. We know that the coffers are as empty as a gaberlunzie's wallet at daybreak, and shall reject the notes with scorn. Then will follow the day of reckoning, and how will Lord Hartington stand? Let us pass by all the smaller men, and ask: What is all this manœuvring and palavering about? What is the meaning and object of all the intriguing, the questionable conferring together of statesmen supposed to hold diametrically opposite views on general politics—some of them in office but minus power, and others clear of responsibility yet in reality controlling the action of the Cabinet? Their object is plain, they do not disguise it—indeed they proclaim it from the housetops—it is to keep Mr. Gladstone out of office. But—

Manœuvring
and palavering.

“Vain are the hopes these sons of men
Upon their works have built.”

They are just so many Dame Partingtons flourishing their puny mops in face of the Atlantic. The Liberal party is true to its leader, and Mr. Gladstone is the greatest power in England to-day. His presence towers aloft above the paltry ambitions and unworthy

Mr. Gladstone,

attempts of small men whose straitened minds, warped with prejudice and self-interest, and unable to look beyond their own narrow cliques and coteries, are oblivious of the grand advance that is taking place all along the line. Assuming that the Grand Old Man were dead and buried, his spirit will live in millions of honest hearts, and the paltry opponents that now block the way will go down like reeds before their advance.

The Crofters.

The people of England are fast making up their minds that the poor Irish tenants and the miserable Crofters in the Scottish Highlands shall have a chance of improving their lot; of living, under less wretched conditions than is at present their fate, the life that God has given them; of emerging from the state of misery to which aristocratic pretensions and greed have consigned them. Only honest intelligence and honest labour, whether of head or hand, have the right, or even the qualification, to rule under the broad sun of freedom that is dawning upon our people.

The furnace of political life.

It is sad to think how many political reputations have been damaged, if not altogether wrecked, by the recent trial to which they have been subjected. The furnace of political life and conflict sings the gaudy wings

of many a would-be legislator. Lancashire Liberalism has long been in a weak, flabby condition. I do not now speak of any failing enthusiasm caused by recent events—on the contrary, I am distinctly of opinion that these have had a bracing effect upon us—but the fact has been patent for years past that as a party we, the Liberals of Lancashire, have exhibited marked signs of degeneration. Our leaders have not known when to take occasion by the hand, and the rank and file have been supine. Some men have a strange notion of what constitutes a politician. It would appear as though they considered that, to be in earnest about political questions, it was necessary to be able to write M.P. at the end of their name. It has been somewhat of a study to me to observe the behaviour of various ex-members of Parliament who were defeated at the last election—Liberals, as a rule. Their defeat seems to have taken all the political strength and stamina out of them. Time was, when the magic letters were appended to their names, that they seemed to be boiling over with energy, prepared to labour day and night to remedy abuses; oblivious of toil in the furtherance of progress, and loud in their declarations of fealty to their leaders. Defeat came, and instead of this instilling

Lancashire
Liberalism.

Behaviour after
defeat.

Poor political
props.

Mr. Jacob
Bright.

redoubled vigour into their souls, they have become utterly unmanned—they have shrunk into themselves like a closed telescope, or stand whimpering and sulking like baulked schoolboys. Unless they are “cock-o’-the-walk” they will not play. They are dry land sailors these—brave and mettlesome and valorous when the sky is unclouded and the sea smooth, but let there come a capful of wind and a splash of spray to derange their dandy nankeens, and they sneak below in cowardly fashion. Poor political props these! As well try to use a yard of rope for a walking-stick as expect to get any support from them. It is a sad spectacle when a man is not only vanquished but destroyed. To a man of valour, defeat, when it comes, only stirs the blood in his veins, and nerves him for the future returning struggle. The conduct and bearing of a brave man at such a time, and after it, acts like an invigorating tonic on the spirits of the friends who have fought for him, notwithstanding that the fight has been an unsuccessful one. I venture to give you an example of such a man—Mr. Jacob Bright. I look upon Mr. Bright as one of the bravest of men and politicians. He is deserving of a noble place in our political annals. Review his whole career, and you will find that neither defeat nor success has affected

him in the timely expression of his clear and cool-headed and far-seeing utterances. Defeat has never unmanned him, and he is with us to-day, an honourable and disinterested political guide and representative—one of whom we are proud, and a worthy example to imitate.

I am strongly of opinion that the great question of the hour is gradually but surely verging to a settlement in the direction of our earnest wishes—a settlement such as will satisfy the Irish people. It should not be overlooked that besides the Dissentients at the last election there were what I may call the Abstentients—those, and they were not few, who, without having distinct opinions of their own on the Irish question, were influenced in the withholding of their votes by seeing the action that was taken by some of the leading men in the party. These have had time for reflection. An educational process has been going on amongst them, and, as I find from personal contact and conversation, many of them are now ready to admit that their Liberal instincts were at fault, and that they made a mistake in not trusting the experience and wisdom—not to mention the transparent honesty—of a great and safe leader, choosing momentarily to desert him, and follow in the track of less judicial minds. These men will

The great question of the hour.

Dissentients and Abstentients.

Liberal only by
snatches.

generally return to their allegiance, and when the next election struggle comes we shall find them on our side. The Dissident ranks are undergoing a thinning process, and of those that remain to them, whilst some are opposed to Irish self-government from conviction, others are well known to be Liberal only by snatches. They do not live and walk constantly in the bright light of Liberal truth, and therefore, in an emergency such as we have recently witnessed, they are not to be depended on. The probability is, however, that even they will see it to their advantage to come over, as they dearly love to be on the winning side.

Hidden springs
of feeling.

There are unfortunate prejudices against Irishmen in the hearts of numbers of people in this country. It does not arise from personal knowledge of Irishmen, but rather for want of that personal knowledge and contact. In many respects the Irish character is superior to our own; especially in its strength of sympathy, and its unbounded and unvarying hospitality and generous kindliness. The present crisis, which we need not regret, has done much to educate and enlighten us all, and in that important aspect it has been a great instrument for good. There are hidden springs of feeling in our human breast which we cannot analyse, and

which, though imperceptible to our spiritual sense, exert an entire control over our actions in certain emergencies. On these, depending greatly on our opportunities for acquiring right knowledge, such as our associations and our reading, is built a superstructure of likes and dislikes which apparently for the time being rule our conduct. It is in a great crisis that these assume an influence over us either for good or ill; but time and the insight which reading and discussion bring, eventually show us whether we have been right or wrong. These agencies are at work amongst us. And the result will be, as I venture to predict, that to grant self-government to Ireland, in accordance with the constitutional demand of the people of that country, will be acknowledged as the right and safe and wise course to adopt. Some of the Tory or Conservative orators who air their eloquence for the benefit of their supporters, use extraordinary arguments to irritate Englishmen against the Irish character. They are either very obtuse themselves or their audiences are readily gulled. I observe that Sir James Fergusson, the Tory member for North-East Manchester, in a recent speech delivered to his constituents, had the audacity to declare that the Irish demand for Home Rule, and

Likes and dislikes.

The safe and wise course.

Jupiter.

Irish disaffection generally, arise from the circumstance that the people of that country are always calling on Jupiter to come and help them, instead of putting their own shoulders to the wheel. This ridiculous assertion was actually greeted with applause. Now, as a matter of notoriety, it is just because Jupiter will continually be thrusting himself in between the work of Irishmen and their own broad shoulders that they rebel. They resent the interference of Jupiter, and ask to be allowed to attend to their own wants and business. But Irishmen must not be denied this great expectation of theirs because men with contracted views cannot look at matters with an intelligent appreciation of their character.

The Land Laws.

It is painfully evident, however, when the general quality of the opposition is noted, that the Irish question is not blocked by reason solely of the difficulties involved, nor of any actual threatened danger to Imperial unity. These, of course, are made to look as formidable as possible. The real truth is, that behind this Irish question, and immediately upon its solution—and partly depending upon the nature of that solution—the Land Laws, as they affect the other portions of the kingdom, will have to be taken in hand and dealt with. This is the key to much of the existing

opposition to Home Rule for Ireland. There must be a drastic reform of these laws. The clutch of the dead hand must be unloosed from the land once for all. Facilities for the ready sale and acquirement and registration of the title to land must be inaugurated. In short, there will have to be Free Trade in land to the fullest extent, so that its distribution amongst the people and its wider and more thorough cultivation may be encouraged and promoted. The Highland Crofters' question is the twin-brother of the Irish agrarian difficulty, and the remedy will follow the same lines. The wretched Crofters of Scotland have been gradually and inexorably thinned out, and those that remain have been driven from their homesteads in their native mountain glens, towards the bare rocks of the sea coast, to make room for full-pursed and empty-headed nobodies—titled and otherwise—to pursue the aristocratic sport of deer stalking. Ah, my friends! if that rich man's luxury, the killing of the noble deer, only were involved, we might tolerate the sport for the sake of the relaxation and excitement it affords. But the happiness, and the comfort, and the lives of thousands of the bravest and most industrious of our people are involved! It is the stalking of other than deer—the stalking of human creatures,

The Crofters
Question.

Deer stalking.

The stalking
of human
creatures.

to which we object, and against which we protest, and which we declare shall be arrested if justice lives in the hearts of the people!

Religious
equality.

The question of Religious Equality is one also that must come to the front in the near future. The Irish precedent will yet guide us in dealing with this. The direct and special patronage by the State of one section of religionists, whose position after all is essentially an accidental one, is inimical not only to the conditions of equal justice which every honest citizen has a right to expect and to claim, but it hinders the spread of religion itself. Why should you or I have this stigma imposed upon us of being parties to the upholding of a religious system—I care not whether Protestant or Catholic, or any other—which in its associations and surroundings conflicts with our ideas of the simplicity that should consort with true religious worship? I am not now referring to any money contributions towards the support of the system, but to our assumed connection with it as members of the State that lends the system its patronage. I utterly object to being made a party to the fraud even to that extent. My whole moral nature rebels against the arrangement. Let me further explain. It was only the other day that we were delectated with the portrait of one of the English Protes-

Compulsory
patronage.

tant Bishops decked out in all the haberdashery of his office—the picture, which was a coloured one, being presented by way of supplement to one of the illustrated newspapers. There was this Bishop dressed in full canonicals—if that is the proper word—enough to make a man feel sorry to think that any human being, much more a successor of the Apostles, unless he were masquerading, should get himself up in such a manner. I could only compare his tawdry toggery to that of a character in the “Mikado,” or to one of our Lancashire pace-egggers in olden times. He ought, considering his office and his professions, to feel ashamed of himself: and yet, to look at the face of the man, you would take him to be not altogether devoid of common sense and decency. Now, by all means, if mummerly of this kind in connection with religion is relished and enjoyed by any section of the people, let them indulge it to their heart’s content, and at their own expense, but do not insult me, as a member of the State, by claiming and compelling my patronage for that which is revolting to my understanding. You have no more right to compel my patronage and support for that than for the tambourines and triangles and drums in the army of General Booth.

A successor of the Apostles.

Compulsory patronage.

So much for political questions. Of political

Political parties. parties I venture to say that it must be evident to all but those who are wilfully blind, that the old Tory party, as a party, is all but extinct. A few of this ancient class of politicians remain in the House, but they are sadly out of their element, and their thoughts wander back to a past that is unfamiliar to present day politicians.

The old Tory party.

The Whig party

If the old Tory party is at the last gasp, much the same thing may be said of the Whig, if, indeed, it has not already given up the ghost. Those of this class that remain gradually sidle closer to their ancient Tory acquaintances, and they finally coalesce like drops of moisture on a window pane. The two have ideas largely in common, and so they afford another illustration of the truth of the proverb that "Birds of a feather flock together." Each of these two political parties has had its day. They served the ideas and purposes of the men and of the times, and we may admit that the record of each is not barren of good achievements.

The Conservative party.

Even the modern Conservative party is far from being a plant of sturdy growth. It does not multiply and increase. The forces of the time are against it. The future for Conservatism is not bright with promise of fruitfulness; on the contrary, it views with undisguised dismay the progress of political thought and action, and like

the limpet to the rock it clings to what remains of fast mouldering privileges. A party that finds itself unable to muster a respectable Cabinet, consisting of only fifteen persons, out of the number of its adherents, can never hope to control for long the destinies of the Empire.

The idea of a party of "Tory Democrats" is almost too absurd to deserve serious attention. The term is absolutely void of sense, unless words have lost or have changed their significance. "Tory" I can understand. "Democrat" conveys to my mind an intelligible meaning. But a "Tory Democrat" is as much of a nondescript as the cayman that Waterton discovered in the course of his wanderings in the wilds of South America. You might just as well tell us of a muddy, clear river; or a shallow, deep pool; or a bright, rusty sword. There is just as much sense and significance in the one as in the other. It is only blarney unrelieved by a twinkle of wit.

Tory
Democrats.

None of these things can with truth be said of the Liberal party. It is the living and moving political force of the age. We all feel it to be so. Even the dry bones of Conservatism owe what life animates them to the inductive power of Liberalism. Conservatism has no positive life or mission in itself. It is a mere negation, and only exists because of Liberal truth. So in theology, no

The Liberal
Party.

A picture of
Liberalism.

God no devil. The picture which we paint is of a glowing landscape, rich with river and meadow and forest trees, and deep down in the fruitful soil are implanted the seeds of future vitality and beautiful growth. The principles of Liberalism are neither narrow nor mean in their aims. They take account of the good of a whole people, and exclusiveness and privilege must stand aside, or be crushed beneath the wheels of the advancing chariot, on which Mercy and Justice stand side by side. At times the opposing forces of reaction and obstruction coalesce and gather strength sufficient to momentarily arrest its progress. The advance is checked for a season, and the men in harness are content to take breathing space, whilst they review their achievements and successful struggles, but only to renew them with redoubled vigour by-and-by. It is a high honour and privilege—we are the privileged classes after all—to belong to this great party of progress; to be imbued with earnest longings for the full fruition of noble purposes; to feel the pulses of the healthier life which we desire shall be the lot of all our people. And even if we fail to realise all that we strive to achieve, we have an abounding and satisfying faith that, in the coming time, those who follow in our track will attain to the higher standard of political and social life to which we to-day aspire.

Achievements
and successful
struggles.

SPEECH AT FAILSWORTH,

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST, 1887.

*Delivered in the New Jerusalem School,
Failsworth.*

Mr. Newbigging said: I am rejoiced to hear gratifying accounts of the energy and growth of Liberal principles in Failsworth, and of the earnestness that characterises the men whom you look up to as your leaders. I sincerely hope that you will, by your continued interest in those principles, strive to do all that lies in your power to encourage the hearts and strengthen the hands of your leaders, and bring recruits to your ranks, so that when the time comes for the next electoral struggle you may be fully prepared to carry the election to a successful issue. It is well that you should be ready for eventualities. Under ordinary circumstances a Conservative Government cannot be expected to have a long lease of power, and the reason is apparent: Conservatism is only negative in character. It never legislates but in a very tentative and paltry fashion, and legislation at the present time is essentially needed. The statesman who in the last generation—Sir Robert Peel—tried to infuse positive life into the Tory party was ostracised for his

Advice*to
Liberals.

Conservatism.

foolhardiness; and the man who in the present generation—Lord Randolph Churchill—has attempted the same thing, has had to retire from the Ministry discomfitted and defeated. It is evident, therefore, that the existing Government will scarcely be able to survive the strain of the session which has just opened. The present Conservative Government is, in fact, more of a stop-gap Government than was even the last Government of the party. They occupy their position pending the agreement of Liberals amongst themselves as to the course of future legislation, specially in regard to Ireland.

An awakening
taking place.

There can be no doubt that throughout the whole country an awakening is taking place. The great questions of sorely-needed reform with which we shall be called on to deal in the near future, are being canvassed in a way that proves the strong interest of the people in the measures to the introduction of which they are looking forward. If precedent is worth anything as a guide, we may rest assured that legislation of an important character will have to be undertaken by, and will tax all the abilities of, our foremost statesmen. The passing of the Reform Act of 1832 was followed by a lengthened period of legislative activity. Many serious abuses were remedied. Slavery in our colonies was abolished. A new

The Reform Act
of 1832.

Poor Law was passed, as was also the Municipal Reform Act, and later on the Corn Laws were repealed. So, also, after the passing of the second Reform Act of 1867, the compulsory payment of Church Rates was abolished; the Irish Church was disestablished; and the Ballot and other important Acts were passed. Now, if only the people are educated into an understanding of the anomalies which exist in the Constitution, and which hamper progress and hinder the solution of the serious problems which confront us, half the battle will have been won, and further great advances will be made. Theirs is the heritage of the thought and action of the age. We have scarcely as yet begun to realise this great fact, but it is a fact, nevertheless. At one time, and not long ago, the people were only ruled: now they are the veritable rulers. This is perceived by thoughtful men, and therefore it is that the importance of educational work is recognised. In the higher ranks of society there are many good and able men, as we all know—men to whom our gratitude is due for the part they have taken in the struggle for political progress; but, at the same time, there are men amongst them of a character less admirable, who have used the power which they possessed more to forward the

The Reform Act
of 1837.

The veritable
rulers.

Lords and
dukes.

Effect of the
last Reform Act.

interests of their own class than to promote the general good of the nation. This they have been able to do under our narrow Constitutional system, which conferred the power of government and of legislative action upon them, and excluded the vast majority of the people from any immediate share in legislative work. At one time, therefore, lords, and dukes, and men of great wealth among the aristocracy, towered high by reason of their privileges, and owing to the influence they were enabled to exert in the State. Such men will yet always be able to exercise a large share of influence when they are noble in reality and not in name only, and when they show themselves worthy to exercise it. The circumstances, however, are now of a different character to what they have been heretofore—the influence of these men will now depend more on their intellectual and moral qualities than on their possession of titles, and wealth, and broad acres. The last Reform Act did more than give a preponderating share of political power to the people when it conferred the franchise on the agricultural labourer. It has given opportunities to the deserving amongst the aristocracy of wielding a more benign influence than before, and it has presented a nobler standard of achievement to the states-

men of our country. Thus it is seen that great and wise measures bring with them more of inherent good than even their authors suspect. Such measures have an inductive power, not unlike what we find in the electric current as it courses through that wonderful coil which the genius of Faraday gave to mankind. Or, to use a more homely simile to express what I wish to convey—you who do gardening work are familiar with the sight of the healthy bulbous root newly dug out of the rich mould, with its host of smaller bulbs clinging to it. So in very truth it is that every beneficent act of legislation has clustering around it a numerous progeny of healthy, well-favoured children. The time for makeshift legislation has gone by. The necessity for it, if the necessity ever existed, has passed away. We all stand up as lawmakers—not lawmakers for others to the exclusion of those others, unless, indeed, we desire to govern those others by strength of arm, not treating them as equals—and in the interest of humanity it is to be hoped that even those others, wherever they are in the Empire, will eventually be able to emerge from the condition of sword government under which they have at present no choice but to rest satisfied. The wide franchise which has been conferred on the

Inductive
power.

Sword
government.

Disfranchisement or equal rights.

people of Ireland, in common with the people of this country, has given them at least the opportunity, so much desired, of expressing their views on the system of government which has been pursued for so many generations to their disadvantage and injury. And it is clear that an overwhelming majority of the people of that country are influenced by the strongest determination to secure for themselves the right of controlling their home affairs. Sword government is out of the question. To attempt it would be like attempting to put back the sun's shadow on the dial; and you can only now disfranchise the Irish people by annihilating them. There must, however, either be disfranchisement or equal rights. It is well to recognise that fact. There will not be disfranchisement, which means annihilation, as I have said, therefore, there will be equal rights. If one were to express all the contempt that rises to our tongue for men calling themselves statesmen, and especially for such as call themselves Liberal statesmen, who, in the face of such mountainous facts try with puny arms to bar the way, we might lay ourselves open to a charge of discourtesy.

"Is it madness or meanness which clings to them now!"
I can see plainly, however, that the people of

this country are bent on taking the matter firmly in hand, and there are not wanting indications that they will not much longer admit of delay in bringing about a better condition of things.

The attitude of Lord Hartington is far from satisfactory. By his support of the Tory Government his political centre of gravity has been shifted. He no longer stands secure on the broad foundation of Liberal principles, but, like the unsafe chimney-stalk which you have seen, he leans more and more from the perpendicular, and the next stiff breeze that blows may be expected to push him bodily over. I much fear there will come a crash some day, and those half-hearted Liberals who have gathered round him will be buried in the ruins. I do not know what our Bury friends think about Sir Henry James, the henchman of his lordship. No doubt he is sincere enough in his political views, but he is a sickly representative of the advanced Liberalism of his constituents. It appears to me that he has made a reputation for political wisdom by holding his tongue and looking sage, like the owl in the belfry. Every shake of his head is worth nuggets to him ; but what policy does he propound ? I have never heard, indeed, that he has any policy ; but we may answer that his aim is the same as that of his friends—to

The attitude
of Lord
Hartington.

Sir Henry James.

A contemptible
ambition.

Mr. Chamberlain

keep Mr. Gladstone out of office. What a contemptible ambition for pretendersto high politics. If they think they can achieve it for any length of time they are egregiously mistaken. In these days of wider freedom and a more equal franchise I would rather have the common people on our side than all the high-titled personages in the realm. As for Mr. Chamberlain, I cherish the hope of seeing him once more on the side of our leader, though in speaking of opponents he still exhibits a rancour and bitterness of spirit unbecoming in a statesman. However,

"The best may gang a-kennin wrang,
To step aside is human."

It is not easy for a statesman of his eminence to retrace any false step he may have taken. As a Liberal friend remarked to me the other day, he is a big ship, and takes not only a good deal of turning, but he needs plenty of sea-room to turn in. Give Mr. Chamberlain time—do not criticise his action too severely. All his instincts are opposed to Toryism and its methods. He will come slipping in "after dark."

The Irish voice
overborne or
ignored.

If we will only take the trouble to look into the matter we shall soon find convincing proof of the fact that, in so far as the affairs of their country are concerned, the voice of the Irish people in the past has, to all intents and purposes,

been overborne or ignored by our legislators. It is a great satisfaction to know that folly and sin of this kind have come to an end at last. This question of Home Rule is assuming proportions which few of us could have foreseen a brief three years ago, and there is much more in the question than appears on the surface. Look, for example, at the unwieldy growth of London, with its concentrated wealth and poverty. This, to my mind, is one of the saddest results possible of our system of centralised government. There is a magnetic force of attraction towards the governmental centre of a country. Talent, genius, the possessors of great wealth, the victims of poverty—all converge towards the central core of the nation's life; and when, as in the case of London, the growth becomes stupendous almost beyond conception, there is reason for grave apprehension. The establishment of statutory Parliaments to deal with the home affairs of each country—England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales—would be a corrective to the serious evil of centralisation—would be a step in the direction of providing a remedy, and, by promoting decentralisation, would be an unmingled benefit. This is essentially a question with which statesmanship in the near future will have to deal with a courageous and firm hand. How much better would

Results of
centralised
government.

Statutory
Parliaments.

Centralisation
deprecated.

it be if we had national Parliaments for the control and management of purely domestic affairs established in the different portions of the kingdom, with an Imperial Government dealing with all Imperial questions, and having its seat in London as the metropolis of the Empire, and drawing its members from each section. Instead of being an evil and undesirable thing, it would prove to be a blessing in every sense of the word. Not only is this vast centralisation to be deprecated for the reasons I have stated, but at the present time every paltry local interest has to be dealt with by an overworked and harassed Parliament, so crowded with task-work as to be actually scotched and incapable of performing its allotted duties. The consequent expense is enormous, whilst great and pressing questions affecting the welfare of the people are neglected or respited from session to session. Surely there is a want of dignity in our conduct in regard to the legislative machinery of the kingdom. We take care not to perpetrate such egregious folly in our more local business. We do not, for example, send all our petty criminals to be dealt with by the judges of assize. We graduate business of that kind by dealing with certain cases in the ordinary magistrates' courts; others at quarter sessions; and the more important

or serious cases at the assize of the judges. That is a common-sense arrangement. Why not apply the principle to national affairs? It may be urged that the country is not ripe for such a movement as has been suggested. Perhaps that is true, but it is ripening fast, thanks to the flood of light which the discussion of the Irish problem has thrown upon the subject, and it would at least be a forward step to begin the process in Ireland, in regard to which country there is ripeness beyond cavil and question. That this process of devolution will begin in Ireland there is growing evidence day by day. And when the experiment is tried, I have an instinctive belief that its success will be so evident and triumphant that the precedent will be one which we shall gladly follow in the widest sense.

A common-sense arrangement.

Devolution.

I hope I shall not be considered as having wandered into the region of impracticable politics. It is by viewing the question of self-government in this broad and common-sense light that we are enabled to divest ourselves of narrow prejudices, and cast out unmanly fears, in an endeavour to forecast the progress of our country in the domain of future legislation. That we should not be afraid of discussing these probabilities of the future is to have established

Probabilities of the future.

a great advance in our ideas; and if we will only consider that the good of the whole people is concerned in the new departure which is foreshadowed in these governmental arrangements, we shall the more readily appreciate their paramount importance. We are gradually outgrowing the mean ideas of class and privilege. These have held us, body and soul, in an iron bondage so long and so tenaciously, that it is only by a Herculean effort we can cast them off; but, having succeeded in doing that, we shall experience the strength of limb and vigour of soul that come of freedom, and of breathing the purer air that will blow around us.

Prejudices
against
Irishmen.

Priestcraft.

I ask you, as sensible and tolerant men, not to be influenced by the unworthy statements that are sometimes made to prejudice your minds against Irishmen on account of the Catholic religion which the majority of them profess. If there is one thing more than another that I hold in detestation beyond my power to express, it is what is rightly denominated as "priestcraft." Sacerdotal assumption and insolence are more than most of us are able to bear with equanimity. On the other hand, we respect and reverence the man—call him priest or pastor—who follows in the footsteps and does the honest and

blessed work of his Great Master and Prototype. Now, my experience and observation have taught me that, as a general rule, the influence of the priest in Ireland is in no sense an indication of the power exercised by what we understand as priestcraft, but is due mainly to the sympathetic interest taken by godly men in the people's affairs, material as well as spiritual. That is the secret of the influence which the priest exercises in Ireland. It consequently needs no exercise of priestcraft to bind the hearts of a people to a faith which is commended to them by a power—the power of sympathy—which succeeds where mere craft would either be unavailing, or at best would command unwilling adherents. Where there is priestcraft there is tyranny—the terms indeed are synonymous. There has been more of the dominant spirit of priestcraft exhibited and exercised in the agricultural counties of England, within the present generation even, than has existed in Ireland during this century. The last Reform Act has not only conferred the vote on the English agricultural labourer—it has also brought, or is fast bringing him, liberty of conscience, which to a great extent has been denied him by the clerical autocrats who have hitherto held him in bondage. Joseph Arch has let daylight in on that unsavoury phase of

The power of sympathy.

Priestcraft in England.

English life, and I commend his experiences to your consideration, and especially to the consideration of those who are inclined to decry the poor Irish priest pursuing his sacred vocation amongst his people on the desolate hills and bogs of Kerry. I would think twice before I bartered the record of one of these men for that of one-half the palaced and privileged bishops in our more favoured, because less misgoverned, England.

The present
deadlock.

In one important sense, the present deadlock in which we have been landed by the division amongst Liberals is not to be regretted. The discussion of the Irish question has been the means of enlarging our knowledge of Irish history, and making us better acquainted with the cognate subjects which either run on parallel lines, or in their outcome bear a close resemblance to it. One of these is the Crofters' question, on which I claim your attention for a few minutes. The story of the wrongs suffered by the poor Crofters in the Scottish Highlands through many generations, makes one of the saddest chapters in the history of our country. In years gone by the inhabitants of the Highland glens lived in a state of clanship, and in comparative comfort, on the lands which they cultivated, and of which they were joint owners. The lands were held in trust for them by the

The Highland
Crofters.

head or chief of the particular clan to which they belonged, and to whom they rendered suit or service. In course of time changes were introduced in the system. The great chiefs passed away in the course of nature, and claims were gradually set up by their descendants of absolute ownership of the soil which had previously only been held in trust. The common people were not consulted on those changes, and their rights came to be entirely ignored. Estates changed hands by sale and purchase, arbitrary rents were charged, and thus landlordism was generally introduced into the country. "A man has a right to do what he likes with his own," was the motto of many of the landlords, and hence came the inhuman clearances of vast tracts of country to make space for the large deer forests which now exist. The inhabitants whose forefathers had cultivated the soil for generations, were turned adrift, and their dwellings burnt or rased to the ground. Many of them emigrated to other lands, and those who remained were driven nearer and nearer to the sea coast, where, on the scanty soil that covers the rocks, they are now barely able, by unremitting labour, to make a living for themselves and families. The Land Laws of the country—laws, observe you, made by the landowning class when the power was almost exclusively theirs—permitted and justified

The
introduction.
of landlordism
into the
Highlands.

Deer forests.

Human
icebergs.

The rights of
property.

those proceedings. And now in these days we find men, who, either ignorant of the circumstances or indifferent to the wrongs suffered by the people, can look with equanimity on, or treat with contempt, the awakening spirit of the Crofters who are agitating to change or modify the system which has wrought them such grievous wrong. "The rights of property must be upheld," say these human icebergs. It never occurs to them that there can be such a thing as legal injustice. Now, sir, I am not the man to advocate confiscation to the injury of individuals—that is one of those instruments of government which the exclusive rulers of bygone times often resorted to without scruple, and by means of which they enriched themselves and their needy adherents, whilst they impoverished those who differed from them in their political or religious opinions—but I make bold to say that whoever places the rights of property above the right of the subject to live by honest labour, and when the means of livelihood are at hand, and from which he is debarred, is neither wise nor just in his professions. These property rights, on which interested landowners lay so much stress, need to be abridged in the interest of the people, and the task of accomplishing this is one of the highest and most imperative of the duties which devolve on our statesmen.

**ADDRESSES ON SOCIAL
AND
LITERARY TOPICS.**

SPEECH AT THE LITERARY CLUB,
MANCHESTER, AFTER THE READING
OF A PAPER BY MR. HENRY NUTTER.

MONDAY, JANUARY 25TH, 1886.

Monday, the 25th of January, being the anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, the evening at the Manchester Literary Club was appropriately devoted to the Scottish singer. Mr. Henry Nutter, of Burnley, read the paper of the evening, on "Robert Burns as a Poet of Nature."

Mr. Thomas Newbigging said: I have listened with a high degree of pleasure to the sympathetic and discriminating eulogium which Mr. Nutter has pronounced upon the writings and to the memory of Burns, on this the natal day of the poet. It was only to be expected that the Manchester Literary Club, through the mouth of one of its members, would speak in kindly and appreciative, and even in enthusiastic, words of the Scottish singer. It is indeed fitting that the members of a society who love literature for its own sake, apart from the mere question of bread and cheese—and that is the spirit in which

Robert Burns.

The love of
literature.

Burns himself loved it—should lay one more stone on the cairn that is raised to the memory of the poet.

It is mere commonplace at this day to say that Burns was one of the great men of genius of our country. That verdict has been pronounced by those best able to judge. To those of us who have read and studied and revelled in the creations of his muse, it is a veritable truth. As one of the master spirits whose power and greatness were scarcely estimated in his lifetime, we now feel his overshadowing presence and grandeur. It is not for this poem or that that we call him great, though it is only genius that could have produced most of these, but for the noble and wise and glorious sentiments and expressions scattered with such prodigal wealth throughout his works. Many of his poems are lowly in character—some of them may even be considered vulgar. All the same, they are great and noble. The power and greatness of the poet are stamped upon them all. Lowly, vulgar, great all the same. Only a massive spirit could have moulded the thought and expression in either instance.

A massive spirit.

Taking Burns's songs and poems in the mass, they are one continuous and coherent epic of his short life. In varying melody, in changing

rhythm, but each piece a chapter in the grand epic which he has left to humanity. Even in the tragic brevity of his life, much as we regret it for many reasons, there is something for satisfaction. We think ever of the eternal youth of Burns. He is young eternally. Only thirty-seven when he died, we know him and think of him always as a young man. Youth is for ever associated with the memory of Burns. He died in the summer of his days. Poor in this world's goods, he has yet left a priceless legacy to mankind. His errors and his failings shrink into the background, and the noble nature of the man is more widely appreciated as the years roll by. So may it be!

The external youth of Burns.

ADDRESS AT LEIGH,

MONDAY, OCTOBER 4TH, 1886.

*Delivered in the Lecture Hall, Liberal Club,
before the Literary Society, Leigh.*

It gives me very great pleasure to be here amongst you this evening, and to undertake the duty which I have just performed of distributing the prizes to the successful students in connection with your Institute. It is an excellent feature in the working of this Institute that, as I

understand from your secretary, the ladies and gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood take a warm personal interest in its affairs. I trust that the members, especially the younger members, fully appreciate the efforts that are put forth in their behalf.

Ancient Roman
and Grecian fires

It appears to me that an Institution like this in the midst of a town may be compared to the fires that were kept continually burning in ancient times in Roman or Grecian states either for symbolical or religious purposes, or for purposes of purification. It has a refining and civilising and soothing influence, and by its help we are enabled to turn our thoughts occasionally aside from the more sordid livelihood-getting, money-grubbing toils, in which much of our life is occupied from day to day. And remember, all you young people, to whom I particularly address myself, that the efforts of each of you to draw from the Institute all the intellectual and moral benefits which it is capable of imparting, is to secure your own progress and extend your own reputation, and that progress made and that reputation secured will, as a matter of course, reflect credit on the Institute and all associated with it. I trust that the valuable and beautiful prizes which I have had the honour of handing to you this evening may have the effect of

stimulating you to further exertions in the acquirement of knowledge. Stimulants to learning.

Perhaps we in England, and in these days, do not appreciate our advantages as we ought. I am not very old, but I can well remember the time when books were very much dearer, and far less accessible than the best books are now; as for prizes, the choice was very limited indeed. We are now careful in giving prizes to make them such as to meet the special tastes and requirements of the pupil, and that will assist him in his future studies. But that was not always the case in earlier days. The art of prize-giving was scarcely understood. I remember, in the year 1842, gaining the first prize in geometry in my class at school. I had the choice of two books, but I was not allowed to look into either of them. I had to judge by their outside appearance, and take my choice accordingly. One was evidently a picture book, and, although that was tempting enough, I preferred the other which appeared to contain more reading matter of some kind. Well, when I got the book and came to look into it, what do you think it was? "Dr. Gregory's Advice to his Daughters," a very excellent little book, and one that I used afterwards to read with pleasure, but hardly suitable for a student in geometry. Prize-giving.

Modern facilities
for education.

The other book, which was handed to the next highest scholar in the class, was one of those picture books that open out like the sides of an accordeon, and long enough to make a skipping rope of. It contained a pictorial representation of Noah and the animals entering the ark. Neither of the books was at all suitable to youths who were studying geometry—unless, indeed, they were intended to have the effect of diverting the mind into other channels by way of relief from the severer studies. I just mention this incident to show you to what a different and higher plane we have attained in these later days, when the facilities for education have been so greatly extended and cheapened, and made more attractive.

The variety and multiplicity of subjects that are accessible to the poorest of us now-a-days, and the cheapness of educational literature, and literature in general, is wonderful. The curriculum of your own Institute, for example, would have done honour to some of the colleges of by-gone days. And then as to the cost. Why, most of you who have been fortunate enough to win prizes have got your subscription returned with more than compound interest. You are receiving an education and are actually being paid for accepting that education with intelligence

and promptitude. This reminds me of the competition that existed some years ago between two rival steamship companies at Fleetwood. The steamers of both companies plied between Fleetwood and Belfast, and the rivalry between them was so strong for a time that they carried passengers backwards and forwards for nothing; and at last one of them brought things to a climax by offering a twopenny loaf to every person that would accept a free passage between the two ports. Now, yours, it appears to me, is almost a parallel case in regard to the matter of your education.

An absurd result
of competition.

And now what shall I say by way of encouragement to those who are unsuccessful competitors in the examination? You are not left unrewarded after all, even if you have neither gained a prize nor a certificate. Each of you must be sensible of having advanced a stage in the studies you have had in hand. If you have not gained a positive entrance into the wider vestibule of the temple of learning, you are at least within the precincts or the porch, and it only requires a little more persevering effort on your part to enable you to accomplish all that you desire. Work and wait, remembering that the unsuccessful candidates of one year are often the successful ones of the next.

Unsuccessful
competitors.

Be assured that well-directed efforts almost invariably meet with their due reward.

Learning by
experience and
observation.

In the midst of all our acquirements there is one point that none of us should overlook. It is this: that not all knowledge is wisdom, though the two are sometimes confounded. Learning and knowledge are, however, the keys that unlock the treasury of wisdom—they are the tools that the skilful journeyman, after his apprentice days are over, applies to shape his work in the business of life. To some, wisdom comes only by dearly-bought experience. It is the saying of a wise man that “Fools learn by experience, wise men by observation.” Well, I quite believe that the knowledge we acquire in our youth, if it be of the right kind, assists us materially to apply our powers of observation, so as to enable us to avoid the errors and difficulties that would otherwise beset our path in life. Besides that, everyone in these days of discussion and inquiry should be able to hold his own in intelligent society. A little knowledge, it is said, is a dangerous thing, and that is quite true of those who, having only a limited amount of knowledge or information, act as if they had sounded the very depths of wisdom. But even a little knowledge of science in general is very desirable, and makes life more

A little
knowledge.

enjoyable. To stand head and shoulders above their fellows, however, it is absolutely necessary that students should thoroughly master one subject. History, political economy, chemistry, and all the branches of science demand this. It is easy to give instances of what I mean. Take Professor Tyndall, for example, in the department of physics. So with Sir Henry Roscoe as a chemist; Professors Osborne Reynolds, Williamson, and Boyd-Dawkins, each in his separate domain; and Sir William Roberts as a physician. So, also, it was the case with John Stuart Mill and Professor Fawcett in the department of political economy; and so it is to-day in practical politics with Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and Lord Salisbury. How each of these men, and others that I might name, towers above his fellows by reason of his having each mastered his special subject. Each of these great men is possessed of varied and extensive knowledge and experience, but each is master in the one particular department of human knowledge to which he has devoted his life and his powers. And then, again, how much of real positive pleasure and value there is associated with the pursuit of those subjects. Take chemistry, for example. The study of this would be of the truest value to all of us, not

Worthy
exemplars.

The value of
knowledge.

only in our daily occupations, but even in our amusements. It enables us to unravel the mysteries of nature, to reap the reward of expanded intellect, and the rich blessing that awaits the discovery of truth.

In the pursuit of knowledge, accuracy of thought and expression and work should be cultivated. Much real genius, not to mention talent, is often lost in a quagmire of slovenliness. Without accuracy and method a man may be but

“The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read,
With loads of learned lumber in his head.”

Deference to
teachers.

And now one final word. Let me urge upon the pupils to pay the utmost deference to their teachers. No doubt it is a

“Delightful task to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot,”

but it is also an irksome one at times, and it must be disheartening to a teacher to have an iceberg of a scholar, who pays little or no heed to his studies, but is thanklessly indifferent to all the efforts that are put forth in his behalf.

Finally, it is well to be clever, but it is better to be good and true. You may not all excel as students, nor become leaders of men; but you may at least, by kindly word and deed and a determination to fulfil your part in life to the

best of your ability, accomplish much, and win for yourselves the respect and love of your fellow-men.

SPEECH AT BACUP,

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4TH, 1886.

Delivered in the Co-operative Hall, Bacup, the occasion being the Annual Soirée of the Members and Friends of the Bacup Co-operative Store.

Mr. Thos. Newbigging, who was enthusiastically received, said: Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I believe I have to move the adoption of the report, and I do that with very great pleasure, heartily re-echoing the sentiment with which that report closed. I hope that the dark cloud, which has for so many years hung over the Rossendale valley, is about to disperse at last. I believe it has begun to disperse, and that in a short time we shall have a revival of the old good times in Rossendale.

Trade in
Rossendale.

It gives me very great pleasure to meet you here this evening, and on this platform. Looking around at the old familiar faces on my right hand and on my left, and in the body of this meeting, and, in particular, looking at the face of his Worship the Mayor, who is an old friend

Familiar faces.

of mine, I am reminded of past times in Rossendale. As I came along in the train this afternoon, I began to think what rapid strides Bacup has made within the last thirty or forty years, since first I knew it, about 1849 or 1850. You had then no Corporation, and, of course, no mayor—you had not even a Local Board. The only public officials that I remember were what were called the "Lighting inspectors." These men had the management of the lighting of the town, and, just to show you how they attended to that duty, I may say that occasionally, and frequently, during the whole of the winter the town was left unlighted. You had no local weekly newspapers in those days, and I believe you had only one policeman. I don't know whether it is a mark of advancing civilisation or not, but I believe you have now upwards of twenty policemen to keep you in order and take care of your lives and property. I believe the first policeman was Nelson Howarth. I remember him very well. But before Nelson Howarth appeared on the scene there were the constables, "Jim Blacksmith," "Bill-'ith'-Loin," "Long Sam," and "Long George," each in his turn. "Long George" was a familiar figure for many years in Bacup, and I do not think we should, after they are gone, allow the memory of those old people to be

Bygone days in
Rossendale.

The village
constables.

forgotten. If I had time, and if this were a suitable occasion, I could tell you many a curious story about "Long George"—(A voice, "Give us one")—and some day I may do so, and give a sketch of the man as he lived and as I knew him. One of our friends on the platform asks me to give you one of the stories I have about "Long George." I will comply with the request. At the beginning of his time, when he was appointed constable of the village of Bacup, he lived in Lane Head Lane. On one wintry night, cold and stormy, the snow drifting heavily, a night when folk could hardly keep their night-caps from being blown off, a number of young fellows determined they would play a trick on "Long George." So they waited until they knew he had got well into bed—about eleven o'clock—and then they went up to his house in the lane, and thundered at the door. George put his head out of the window, and saw two or three chaps down below. "What dun yo want, chaps?" he called out. One of them shouted, "George, yo're wanted down at th' Dragon yonder, first thing." "What's th' matter theer?" asked George. "There's about twenty chaps feighting yonder, a' of a rook, and if thae doesn't look sharp and come down and sunder 'em, they'll be one-half on 'em kilt!" But George saw

"Long George,"
the constable.

A practical joke.

through the joke, and, ruminating for a moment, he answered, "I'll tell yo what yo maun do, chaps." "What maun we do, George?" they asked. "Go yor ways back," said George, "and lay 'em out on th' tables, as mony on 'em as gets kilt, and i'th' morning I'll come down and count 'em," and with that he crashed the window down again, leaving the discomfited jokers to find their way back to the bar-parlour at the Dragon. So much, at present, for "Long George."

Co-operation.

I have observed, Mr. Mayor, that a correspondence has been going on in the newspapers during many weeks past on the question as to whether Co-operation is beneficial to the community. I have occasionally looked into the correspondence, though I confess that I have not taken the trouble to read the whole of it, seeing that my mind has long been made up on the affirmative side. The opponents of the movement, I have, however, observed, have not adhered with logical consistency to the point at issue, but have invariably wandered away from it to side issues, which, though important enough in themselves, do not touch the fundamental question. There are men who, with equal want

Want of logic.

of logic, are ready to condemn Christianity because they find hypocrites and self-seekers

among its professors. Now, any great movement, however good and beneficent, is liable to be abused, and made the stalking-horse of selfish men for their own unworthy purposes. There are unfaithful and undutiful servants to be found occasionally in connection with the best of causes—dishonest men who warp and twist what is intended for the benefit of many to serve their own private ends—who use their position for their own special aggrandisement to the injury of the community. The co-operative movement, however, I make bold to say, has suffered less hurt from such men and such influences than almost any other great movement of the century, having either a purely financial basis, or one founded to carry out philanthropic objects, and at the same time necessarily requiring large funds for its working; and that which I have observed in regard to the co-operative movement throughout the country generally may be applied with even greater force and truth to co-operation in Bacup, and, indeed, throughout the whole of the Rossendale Valley. I had for many years an intimate personal acquaintance with some of your leading men—sterling men, though, as a rule, in the humbler rank of life—who devoted their great abilities with a rare fidelity and an untiring

Dishonest
servants.

Sterling men.

devotion to the interests committed to their charge. I could name several of these men, but it would be invidious to give an incomplete list. You know them as well or better than I; but I cannot resist mentioning the name of your late secretary, Mr. Thomas Brierley, who died last year, after spending the best portion of his life in your service. I knew Mr. Brierley very well—one of the most modest and retiring of men, conscientious to a fault, and untiring in his assiduity. I do not know whether you have got his and other portraits of those who have passed away hung upon your walls in any room in this building; but, if not, at least I hope that you keep the memory of such men green in your hearts, and that there are those among you who are walking in their footsteps.

Worthy to be
remembered.

I have sometimes heard it asserted that stores of this character are injurious to the trade of shopkeepers in towns where such stores exist. If that were true, it would be, to that extent, a fair argument for your opponents to use. But I deny its truth. It is altogether a superficial and inaccurate view to take. I can prove beyond question that this is so. Now, notwithstanding that you have large premises, and are doing a trade commensurate with the capital you employ, I find, so far as one can judge, that the shop-

keepers of the town and district are also doing well, and that they have no cause to complain, and, as a matter of fact, do not complain, of the stores in their midst. Now, assume for a moment that you closed your stores—that you retired from business, say in six months hence—and returned the capital contributions to your subscribers, would the position of the shopkeepers in the town be improved by such action on your part? Certainly not. The result of your closing would at once be that a dozen or more new shops would be opened in the town, and to those that now exist the competition would be as great or greater than it is at present. But it may be said that although there is little or no injury caused to the other existing traders, there was a number of them injured at the beginning, when you first opened shop and commenced operations. Here, again, there is a fallacy. You did not, like Minerva, spring full fledged from the brow of Jove. Your growth has been gradual—you have taken years to arrive at your present dimensions—and whilst you have been growing, the population around you has also been growing and increasing. Nobody has been taken unawares by the movement. It isn't as though you had fallen upon the community like a thunderbolt out of a clear

Objections to
Co-operative
Stores refuted.

No injury to
existing traders.

A gradual
progress.

A community of
shopkeepers.

sky. You have had your twilight and your dawn, and your gradual rise, and you are here to-day at your present eminence, and there has been no blinding of eyes by any sudden glare of your presence. Taking, therefore, the very worst view from the side of your opponents, you have only prevented the establishment of a number of retail houses that might otherwise have grown up in the town. But I see no hardship in that—a man cannot be said to have lost that which he never possessed, and I say that if you have limited the number of shops, you have compensated for it by making shopkeepers of the whole community of your members, and, what is more satisfactory still, participators in the profits that otherwise would have fallen into the hands of a few. So that I am right in my contention that instead of being an injury to a single individual, you have by your presence and your growing business greatly contributed to the prosperity of the town and neighbourhood.

Thrift and
economy.

But, over and above all that, the lessons of thrift and economy, which are the natural outcome of healthy co-operation, are incalculable. It would be easy to speak at great length on that phase of the subject, but the facts are so obvious to us all that it would, at this time of day, be waste of time to dwell upon them.

Nobody will deny that the co-operative movement has been the salvation of untold numbers of families. It has kept poverty from many a working man's door. It has diminished pauperism. It has sown the seeds of independence and self-respect in ground that might have remained fallow and uncultivated but for its influence. And it is a powerful instrument and advocate of progress, not only preaching a daily and hourly sermon, but leading the way to its attainment.

Results of
co-operation.

The institution of co-operative stores, as Mr. Smiles has pointed out in his book on "Thrift," is only the adoption, mainly by the working classes, of the principle of union or co-operation for definite objects which had previously and is still largely pursued by the classes more lavishly endowed with worldly goods. I allude to those other co-operative companies—for that is what they really are—who have constructed and who manage our large railway undertakings, whose enterprise supplies us with water and gas, and who provide and equip our ocean steamers for the conveyance of passengers and merchandise to all parts of the habitable globe. It was a happy thought to open this beneficent door of co-operation to the working men and women of our country; and it is only in a free country, and among a thoughtful and free people, that

Middle class
co-operation.

Working class
co-operation.

the inauguration of such an enterprise was possible. It is a matter for congratulation, also, and goes far to account for the success of the movement, that working-class co-operation was originated, and has been brought to its present degree of perfection, by working men themselves. It was a supreme effort of self-help on the part of the working classes to better their condition, and along with this personal effort, and to a large extent as the fruits of it, there has grown up amongst working men a spirit of self-reliance and self-respect. Co-operation, indeed, has been one of the most potent, one of the wisest of schoolmasters, and when the educational history of our country comes to be written, the school of co-operation will not have to be ignored. I have said that this movement amongst working men was inaugurated by working men themselves. I am glad of that. I rejoice that no rich patron had a hand in it. The dignity and grandeur of the movement would have suffered if such had been the case. The monument, from base to summit, has been reared by hands familiar with labour; and so long as there are wise heads and honest hearts to keep watch and ward over it, it will endure and flourish. These wise heads and honest hearts are, of course, indispensable, and I believe they will never be wanting among you.

Wise heads and
honest hearts.

It is well known to everybody that the flannel weavers of the neighbouring borough of Rochdale were the first to initiate the working men's co-operative movement. That was in the year 1844, at a time when the oppressive Corn Laws were unrepealed, when work was often scarce and generally underpaid, and, as a consequence, when the food of the people, heavily taxed, was scanty and bare. It was at a time, also, when political privileges, enjoyed only by the favoured few, were denied to the artisan and the labourer, and the factory worker, and it was before the Ten Hours Factory Bill was passed. Without trenching on politics, I think, in these days of wide suffrage, we must all look back with amazement that such a condition of things could have existed in this country. Well, these Rochdale men—Pioneers as they are honourably called—to the number of about thirty, laid their heads together and formed their new society. Talking about laying their heads together reminds me of the joke of Sydney Smith, the witty Dean of St. Paul's. The Canons had been discussing the question of putting down a wood pavement in the street on each side of the church, but the ways and means being a difficulty they consulted the Dean. "Well," said he, "if you will only lay your heads together the thing will be

Initiation of the movement.

The Rochdale's Pioneers.

Laying their heads together.

Small
beginnings.

done." But the heads of the Rochdale Pioneers were neither wooden heads nor thick heads. They clubbed themselves together, and determined they would each subscribe twopence per week. At the end of about a year they found they had accumulated as much capital as would enable them to buy a sack of oatmeal, and this they distributed amongst themselves at cost price. Those were the days of porridge and treacle—and not bad fare either even in these days, when there is plenty of them, with an occasional change to please the palate. By-and-by they turned their attention to what were then considered more of luxuries, and sugar, coffee, and tea formed part of the commodities in which they dealt. Their members increased yearly, till gradually their society grew to the colossal dimensions to which it has now attained. Well, after the Rochdale Pioneers, I believe that you in Bacup have the honour of first following the good example. Your society was established in the year 1847, close on forty years ago. Like the Pioneers you had a good deal to learn in those early days. You made mistakes at first. One of the mistakes I remember hearing about was the buying of a small cargo of cheeses—they must have been Dutch, or perhaps American, cheeses—but when they came in they were

The Bacup
co-operators.

found to be so hard that a knife blade stood no chance with them. They were more like young "grindlestones" than cheeses. What was to be done? They could not be thrown away—that was out of the question. And so "Long Abb," who was equal to the emergency, brought his hand-saw with him one night, and divided them out into the required number of pieces. There must have been some aching teeth and jaws before those cheeses were finally polished off! It troubles me now that one of those same cheeses was not preserved to put under a glass case for display in the future Bacup Museum. It would have been a great curiosity certainly.

Hard cheese.

Well, you do not make such mistakes now. You have got over all that. And here to-day you have one of the finest household stores in Lancashire, turning over, I see, at the rate of £100,000 per annum. I am rejoiced to see, also, that whilst providing food and clothing for the mortal body you do not neglect food for the mind—the immortal part. One of the grandest treats I have had to-day is the sight of your noble library, of close on 11,000 volumes, and your reading-room tables covered with all the leading newspapers, magazines, and reviews. It is no mean effort that has accomplished all this, and I say that Bacup and Rossendale have

The Library.

reason to be proud of this veritable temple of knowledge that has been reared in their midst.

A temple of
knowledge.

Now I cannot help coming back to this idea of co-operation, and I ask you whether you have ever considered, in looking at your magnificent library, what a wonderful set of co-operators the letters of the alphabet are? There are only twenty-five of them altogether, or twenty-six—I confess I am not quite certain, it is so long since I learnt them—but say twenty-six. There they are, standing in a row, A B C, and so on to Z. Very simple they look, standing each by itself, and not very interesting or inspiring reading. But when they are made to co-operate, forming words and sentences, arrayed and marshalled together by a master mind, how they flash into oratory, and scale the sublimest heights of poetry and song. Look into all the English volumes of your noble library, nay, into all the volumes in the British Museum, and you will not find more than these twenty-six co-operating alphabetical letters. Tennyson, with all his gift of poetic genius, and Mr. Bright in all his grand oratorical flights, has never gone beyond these twenty-six simple letters. It is very wonderful when one comes to think of it, and we begin to see what union or co-operation can accomplish. No doubt

The letters of
the alphabet
co-operators.

there is sometimes co-operation for bad and unworthy purposes as well as for good. The best things and the greatest gifts can be turned to bad account. There are bad books in plenty. But, after all, they are in the minority, and I have an abiding faith in the better side of human nature (notwithstanding that Sam Slick has said that "Human nature is a rum 'un,") and that the better and the nobler part of human nature will eventually, and does even now, triumph over the bad and the debased.

The better side
of human
nature.

Looking at what you have accomplished by co-operation here in Rossendale, and considering all that has been accomplished throughout the country by that same force, I cannot then sympathise with the views of those who attempt to decry the co-operative movement. True, there are not many of that frame of mind now-a-days; but there are a few left, and when I hear of them I am always inclined to put them in the category of that supreme prig, Oscar Wilde, who professed to be disappointed with the Atlantic; or of that other absurd individual who was in the habit of speaking disrespectfully of the Equator.

Objectors to
the movement.

It is well sometimes to take stock of our position, just as you take stock before quarter-days of the goods which you possess in your

- Taking stock.** stores. It is well to take stock of our position as working men and working women, our social position, that we may compare it with that of our fathers and mothers, most of whom have passed away. If we do that, we shall find that we have good reason for congratulation and for thankfulness. We shall find that we owe a debt of gratitude to those who, in bygone times, toiled and struggled and suffered for the good of the generations that were to come after them. I do not wish to speak politics, or to say one word on which a difference of opinion may exist among us, but we may allude to the facts of history; and I sometimes try to picture to myself the condition of the working people—of poor people—in the days, for example, before the
- Corn Law days.** repeal of the iniquitous Corn Laws, and to compare and contrast their condition with the condition of working people at the present time; when the food of the people was taxed so enormously as to shut out its consumption largely from those who, by reason of the toil they had to undergo, had most need of it; when the duty on imported wheat was 24s. 8d., on oats 13s. 9d., on barley 10s. 10d., and on rye 14s. per quarter;
- Bad trade.** when trade was deplorably bad as the effect of these very taxes; when, as Mr. Archibald Prentice declares, speaking of the year 1840,

there were 20,936 persons in Leeds alone whose average earnings were only 11½d. a week; and in one district of Manchester, visited by the Rev. Mr. Beardsall, he found 258 families, consisting of 1,029 individuals, whose average earnings were only 7½d. per week; and these are only a sample of millions in the country who were almost in an equally deplorable and wretched condition. I have just a bare personal recollection of those times, and though I was young and thoughtless, and light-headed and light-hearted, I can summon up in my remembrance the gaunt faces of the multitudes of half-starved men and women who went about the streets in the large city in which I lived. There are those here, older than I am, who have a vivid personal recollection of the days of which I speak, and they could tell us many a story of the shifts to which they were put to make ends meet. I was conversing recently with an old Lancashire friend of mine, who is now considerably over seventy years of age, who has been a worker all his life, and has brought up a large family in respectability. I asked him how he managed to shift through it all. "Ah!" said he, "it was hard doing, for sure! I was nearly at my wits' end sometimes. At one time especially, it was as near touch and go as possible. Out o'

State of the
country.

Starvation
times.

Touch and go.

A stratagem.

work, a lot o' little children in the house, and never a bite or sup to give them. But I be-thought me of a stratagem that often served my turn after that. I went and begged two quarts of th' owdest and th' hardest peas I could get, and I took and scattered a handful or two at a time up o'th' floor. Th' children would set to picking em' up and munching and chewing at 'em, and that used to keep 'em quiet for hours together!"

Advice to young men.

And now a word especially to young men. Cherish a healthy ambition to be of some use in your day and generation. The very possession of such a spirit is a guarantee of well-doing. A healthy ambition in a man is an incentive to progress. It is said, with what amount of truth I am not prepared to vouch, that Americans—United States Americans—never commit suicide. Each man lives and cherishes the hopeful ambition that he may one day attain to the Presidency. Some of you seem to treat that as a joke, and no doubt the saying is intended as a joke. At the same time it forcibly illustrates what I am stating—that a laudable and healthy ambition is an incentive to progress and well-doing. We may not all be blest with strong bodies and iron constitutions, nor possess a very bright promise of lengthened days, but even under such

Incentives to progress.

unfavourable circumstances we are consoled with the knowledge that

"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best."

Recreation and amusement are not only good, but they are essential to assist us in doing good and in acting well our part. But beware of pursuing this endless round of amusement that is so much the tendency of many in these days. Life should not be one eternal guffaw. Neither should one devote an undue amount of time to even games of skill. Billiards, for example, are good enough in their way, and as an occasional relaxation, but pursued night after night they are a waste of precious hours; and their effect, if indulged in unduly and without discrimination, is to enervate the mind. I tell you sincerely I would rather be considered a duffer at making a cannon than have the reputation—the very questionable reputation, considering how much it involves—of being the most expert billiard player that ever handled a cue. But if I go on in this strain you will be apt to think that I am sermonising. Therefore I will conclude with the advice which I heard a distinguished living engineer give to young men. It is applicable to all of us, whatever our age or circumstances, and

Recreation and
amusement.

An engineer's
advice.

Worth
remembering.

is well worth remembering. His advice was this: "Do not be afraid of work. Never be ashamed to soil your hands with honest labour. In all other respects be a gentleman."

INAUGURAL ADDRESS AS PRESIDENT OF THE GAS INSTITUTE,

Delivered at the Twenty-second Annual Meeting held in the Memorial Hall, Manchester, June 9th, 1885.

Formation of
Gas Institute.

Gentlemen,—Twenty-one years ago, on the 11th day of May, 1864, the then members of "The British Association of Gas Managers," to the number of thirty-nine, held the first general meeting of the Association in this city of Manchester. I was one of those present, and can therefore speak from personal knowledge and observation. We sat round a table in a room of the Mechanics' Institution, and Mr. Hawksley, our first and greatly-esteemed president, occupied the chair. Our composition then was much as it is now, except in the matter of numbers. Some of us were middle-aged, the majority were young men. We were all animated by one spirit—a spirit of enthusiasm with a modest side to it, but with a determination that the gas industry, of which we presumed to be the first embodied

representatives in England, should make progress through the enlarged intelligence of its members, to be brought about by the free interchange of opinion and experience. We had an excellent example before us. The Scottish Association had been in existence for some time prior to this, and was doing good work. We were not ashamed to take that as our model; and accordingly, we adopted most of its rules, and established the younger Association on a similar basis.

Earlier
members.

It was not unfitting that Lancashire should have been the birthplace of the Gas Institute. It was in the neighbouring borough of Wigan, as you remember, where Shirley, in the year 1659, observed gas issuing from a well or spring, causing the water to "boyle and heave like water in a pot;" and, on further investigation, he found this to "arise from a strong breath, as it were a wind issuing through the water," which ignited on the approach of a lighted candle, and "did burn bright and vigorous." These are the earliest recorded observations on the properties of carburetted hydrogen. They are intensely interesting as viewed in the light of later events. There is a kind of weird glamour about the description given of this strange "spirit of coal" by the early writer; and if we were inclined to

Shirley's
observations.

The "spirit of
coal."

Beginnings of
the Association.

indulge in anything like poetic license, we might liken the phenomenon observed by Shirley to the beginnings of our Association, which, though small in its earlier manifestations, "did burn bright and vigorous," and bore within itself the promise of greater things in the future—promises which in both cases have not been without their fulfilment.

Lancashire and
gas lighting.

But Lancashire has other things to justify its claim. Coming down to later times, it was in the year 1804 that the first application of gas to the illumination of large premises was made by Murdoch, in the sister borough of Salford, in the lighting of the cotton manufactory of Messrs. Phillips and Lee, and where he also practised mechanical stoking. Clegg was a Manchester man. The hydraulic main was first used by him at Mr. Greenaway's works in this town; and it was at Stonyhurst College where he introduced the lime purifier as a separate vessel. It was in Manchester also, in the year 1804, that Dr. Henry, one of the most distinguished chemists of his day, delivered his course of lectures on the production of gas from coal, and its advantages as a means of obtaining artificial light. The suggestion of the use of lime as a purifying agent also came from the same chemist. I say, therefore, that, bearing all these facts in mind,

it was peculiarly appropriate that Lancashire and Manchester should have been the birthplace of the Gas Institute, and that we should in that birthplace be celebrating this its twenty-first year.

Birthplace of
the Institute.

A great deal has happened since 1864. Our Association has done excellent work, as its yearly Transactions testify. Its numbers now reach close upon 900. It has acted as a bond of union between the members of the profession, and consolidated their interests. The technical education of its members has kept pace with the times; progress has been made in every department of gas engineering and manufacture; and the Institute may justly claim credit for having encouraged and fostered that education, and assisted and paved the way for that progress.

Work of the
Institute.

Well, gentlemen, the future of the Institute will be largely what the members make it. Perhaps it may be that the present meeting marks a crisis in its history. With a growing yearly increase in numbers, there has also of late years been a growth of criticism on its management. For my own part, and I think I also express the feelings of the Council, I rejoice to witness the jealous interest that is being taken by the members in the welfare of the Institute.

The breeze of
discussion and
criticism.

Better the breeze of discussion and criticism, and even censure, if that is deserved, than the stagnation of supineness and indifference. Perhaps some of the criticisms that have been uttered have not been free from acrimony, and other of them have not been justified by the circumstances—at any rate, it were well, if there are signs, as some affirm, of relaxed health in the Institute—I say it were well that, in the year of its majority, it should return to en hale its native air—the air of its birthplace—whence, let us hope and determine, it shall start afresh on its course, braced and invigorated for the work it has to do.

Municipal work
in Manchester.

There is nothing perfect in this world; and healthy and fair criticism is always good. Even the distinguished municipality of Manchester, under whose ægis we are met together to-day, is not exempt from animadversion. No doubt there are vulnerable places in its armour, where the keen arrow of the vigilant critic finds entrance, just as there are in that of the best of governments, whether imperial or municipal. But the administrators of our local affairs, notwithstanding, can point to many great and beneficent works that have been achieved by their wisdom and unrequited industry. Not forgetting the sanitation arrangements, or the

magnificent water supply, both present and prospective, of the city and suburbs, I would point to what is a subject of immediate interest to the members of this Institute, viz., the administration of the gasworks of Manchester. These works were established by the Commissioners of Police, in a very small way, in the year 1807. In 1817 they were enlarged, and in the same year the Commissioners promoted a Bill in Parliament by which they sought and obtained statutory powers which (to quote the words of a late chairman of the Gas Committee) "was the first legislative recognition of the principle that gas establishments might be created by public funds, and be conducted by public bodies, for the benefit of the public."

The gasworks of Manchester.

The precedent thus created, as we are all well aware, has been largely followed by local governing authorities throughout the kingdom. The wisdom of this remarkable step on the part of the Manchester authorities has been justified by the results. The production of gas during the past year was 2,750,000,000 cubic feet of 20 candles average illuminating power. The capital expenditure to the present time amounts to £1,885,000, and this sum may be said to represent the structural value of the undertaking, notwithstanding the fact that the actual burden

A precedent created.

Manchester gas
undertaking.

of capital is only £734,000, the difference being represented by the accumulated yearly depreciation, amounting in the whole to £488,000, and a revenue balance of £663,000. The total sum of the net profits since 1862 has reached £790,000, and this has been handed over to the Improvement Committee in reduction of the rates. The yearly net sum which the town receives from the working of the concern is £76,000, viz., £52,000 in cash, and the free public lighting of the streets, amounting to £24,000. Now, whether we agree or not with the policy of the Council in their manner of dealing with the surplus revenue, we shall all be ready to admit that such results as I have detailed could only have been achieved by sheer hard work and good management.

Advice to
managers.

I have been impressed, whilst attending these annual meetings, by observing the number of young men who constitute the bulk of our members, and contribute so largely to our proceedings in the reading of papers, and in the discussions that follow. This is a pleasant feature, and augurs well for the continued success of the Institute and of the profession generally. To these I would strongly urge assiduous attention to the work they have in hand. They should be distinguished by a

yearning for thoroughness. Some managers I have known—we have all known such—of great ability, who, from giving way to evil habits, were not fit to occupy a position of trust and responsibility, but needed a higher authority constantly to revise and overlook them. Young men, in these days of competition, should either have a fortune or brains, which is just another way of saying that they should make the best use possible of the brains they possess. Success in our profession, as indeed in any other, is to be achieved by working away patiently and perseveringly; maintaining a watchful observation of all the various processes and the phenomena attending them. Pursuing this course, with steady habits, distinction will be insured. This is seldom to be attained at one lucky stroke. It is given to but few of us to rise to fame by some brilliant discovery or achievement that takes the world by storm. As a rule, the men who make their mark on their age have learnt to “scorn delights and live laborious days.” Carlyle has defined genius to be simply the result of taking infinite pains; and that is true to a great extent, for, however much of intellect we may possess, it will prove but a light to lead us astray unless we have combined with it the more homely qualities of patient plodding habits and common sense.

Effects of evil habits.

Carlyle's definition of genius.

Practical
insight.

The members of the Gas Institute are no mere theorists, but, as a rule, hard-headed—many of them hard-handed—practical men. The possession of this practical insight is an advantage which, in its absence, could not be compensated for. At the same time, it is essential that the theory of gas-making should be studied and grasped by those who would attain to the highest rank in the profession. It is this kind of knowledge which makes the philosopher, and gives a largeness and breadth of view to its possessor. He stands, as it were, on a “coigne of vantage,” and is better able, by reason of his wide and deep-reaching insight, to control the forces of Nature for his purposes, and apply them for the use and convenience of mankind. It was well said by the late Mark Pattison, that “abstract science and adjusted theory are, after all, conditions of successful practice. Theory is no hindrance to practice: the real evil is when men take to action without first learning the lessons of theory.”

Theory and
practice.

It speaks well for the ability and intelligence which are brought to bear in the administration of gas undertakings, that at this hour, with scarcely an exception, they are financially prosperous; and this not by reason of augmented charges, but, on the contrary, in the face of a

yearly decreasing rate of charge for the principal commodity in which they deal. If it be urged that gas undertakings possess advantages which some other important commercial ventures do not enjoy, I am not prepared to admit the contention as being strictly accurate. But even if it were proved beyond dispute, I answer that, in so far as they possess these advantages, it is only another proof of the sagacity, intelligence, and ability of those who secured them. The annals of gas lighting, indeed, can present a roll of worthy names of men, the fruits of whose labours (not always well requited) are with us to this hour. So true it is that "the sceptred dead still rule us from their graves." Murdoch, and Clegg, and Malam, and Henry, and the elder Livesey, and Alfred King, and Goddard, and Bowditch, are names more potent with us to-day than ever before, and we cherish the memory and achievements of the men with tender regard.

General prosperity of gas undertakings.

The sceptred dead.

The increasing success which has attended gas enterprise during recent years is mainly due to four causes: (1) To the reduction of leakage or unaccounted-for gas; (2) To the moderate price of the raw material, coal; (3) to the usage of gas for purposes other than lighting; (4) to the increased utilisation of the residual products.

Causes of success.

I might name other subsidiary causes which have contributed to this success, but these are the chief.

Reduction of
leakage.

The reduction of the loss by leakage during recent years is remarkable. It is safe to estimate that twenty to twenty-five years ago the unaccounted-for gas averaged sixteen per cent. of the gas produced. At the present time the average is only one-half that figure, or eight per cent. Taking the difference between the two, and reckoning this upon 100,000 million cubic feet—the estimated yearly quantity of gas produced in the whole of the United Kingdom—we have a saving of 8,000 million cubic feet per annum. The cost price of this may be set down at 1s. 6d. per 1000 cubic feet, representing a saving in money value of £600,000 yearly. The consumers are gainers by two-thirds of this amount, or £400,000 per annum; because the economy has resulted, in chief measure, in a universal reduction in the selling price of gas. If the low average of £100,000 per annum over the past twenty years be taken, the saving to the gas consumers owing to the reduction of leakage during that period amounts to £2,000,000 sterling. It was to be expected that with increased consumption there would be diminished leakage; but to me this remarkable result is a convincing proof

of the growing efficiency in the management of gas undertakings, due to the increasing vigilance and intelligence of those to whom their administration is entrusted.

Since the coal famine (so called) of 1873-4, the price of the raw material of gas manufacture has gradually declined. I am inclined to hope and believe that the minimum in price has been reached. Quite irrespective of any unreasoning panic that might be induced by a contemplation of the early exhaustion of our British coalfields, there are two causes at work which must eventuate in an early increase in the price of coal. These are the constantly-growing consumption of the mineral, and the gradual diminution of a limited area of supply. It is not likely, however, that a reasonable yearly increase in the price of coal will affect the selling price of gas to any great extent. When the price of coal rises, so will also the price of the residuals. Increased coal prices are always coincident with improved trade; and this again implies augmented gas consumption. Furthermore, the growing usage of gas, not only for lighting but for other domestic and trade purposes, will have a compensatory effect for many years to come.

Coal
exhaustion.

Coal prices.

The steady increase that is taking place in the consumption of gas for purposes other than

Cooking and
heating by gas.

illumination is a matter for encouragement and congratulation. Its obvious effect is to furnish us with a series of strings to our bow; to consolidate and strengthen the gas interest, and give stability to investments therein. How much of a dream it would have been considered to have predicted, say twenty years ago, that all our victuals might eventually be cooked by gas; and that gas would soon become a competitor with and a rival of steam as a motive power. Yet that has now really come to pass. The dreams of yesterday have become the realities of to-day. Even assuming for a moment (what there is not the slightest reason for assuming, much less admitting), that its days of light-giving are drawing to a close, there is a splendid field open for coal gas in those other directions—a field in which its success is positively assured, and which only needs cultivating. Why, for cooking, heating, and motive power, gas, comparatively speaking, has scarcely any employment at all; whereas we may rest assured that, great though its value as a light-yielding medium is, it is in these other domains that its greatest future triumphs will be achieved.

Motive power.

I have endeavoured, at some pains, to ascertain the consumption of gas throughout the country for heating, cooking, and motive power;

and although the result of an inquiry of this kind must necessarily be imperfect, from the difficulty not only of obtaining complete returns, but also of the difficulty which managers experience in ascertaining the exact proportion of such consumption in their respective districts, yet, approximately, I am able to state (from several hundred returns which I have received) that the consumption of coal gas for purposes other than lighting amounts in the United Kingdom to six per cent. of the total quantity consumed. Making a selection from the list, however, of those gasworks, whether belonging to companies or local bodies, where special efforts are made, by the holding of exhibitions, the establishment of showrooms, and in other ways, to increase the consumption, I find that it reaches an average of fourteen per cent. of the whole.

Consumption of
gas for purposes
other than
lighting.

Twelve years ago this consumption was only beginning to make itself felt; yet within that brief period considerable industries, giving employment to much capital and many workpeople, have been called into existence to produce the machinery and appliances for the purpose. And this is not the only gain, because the use of gas for the purposes named means a saving of time and manual labour, and is an important step towards the solution of the difficulty of the smoke

Machinery and
appliances.

**The smoke
nuisance.**

nuisance, which casts its blighting shadow over our towns. This department of gas enterprise, it must be evident to us all, is in its merest infancy, and the coming years will witness its vast and certain development. As gas managers, we are familiar enough with the names of "meter inspector" and "lighting inspector." It would be to our interest to initiate a new *employé*, to be called the "heating inspector," fully qualified to instruct consumers in the proper use of gas in that direction, and to develop this special department. The uses to which gas may be advantageously put in every branch of trade where heat is required, are only limited by the number of such trades. For instance, in coffee roasting, in the manufacture of confectionery, the baking of bread, the finishing of shoes, in dentistry, in the production of jewellery, in wire

Uses of coal gas.

welding, tempering steel, enamelling, and a hundred others. Adopting this suggestion, and prosecuting with vigorous effort the spread of the knowledge of the value and economy of gas in this direction, the yearly increases of five to ten per cent. in the consumption would speedily be turned into fifteen and twenty per cent., and this with but little addition to existing gas plant, as the consumption for these purposes would be required principally in the daytime.

The day, indeed, has gone by when a five or even a ten per cent. annual increase in consumption should suffice.

I venture in this connection to call attention A good example. to one striking example of what may be done in the direction indicated. In the town of Northampton, where the gasworks are under the able management of Mr. Eunson, the present annual consumption of gas is 215,000,000 cubic feet; and 90,000,000 cubic feet of this, or more than two-fifths of the whole, are used for purposes other than lighting. There are in use in the town of Northampton 250 gas-fires, 2,700 cooking and boiling apparatus, 400 small stoves used by shoemakers for heating their finishing irons, and 40 gas-engines. Again, to show what is being done by only one manufacturer of apparatus, Mr. Fletcher informs me that his out-turn of laboratory and workshop appliances Appliances for heating by gas. for heating by gas is equal to a consumption of 300 cubic feet of gas per day. This, reckoned on the year, amounts to the surprising total of 15,000,000 cubic feet. The report on the Gas Section of the International Exhibition, held in the Crystal Palace during 1882-3, and which has been issued since we last met, by the Committee appointed by the Gas Institute, has been dealt with at length in the pages of the different

technical journals; and I will not remark on it further than to say that the two volumes are a treasury of information which every gas manager should assimilate for his use.

The gas engine.

I am not as sanguine as a high authority recently expressed himself that the gas motor will soon, or even eventually, displace the steam motor. Admitting that the percentage of efficiency in the utilisation of heat is higher in the gas-engine than it is, or ever can be, in the other, the question of fuel cost will always stand in the way of its adoption in large manufactories, and in other places where great power is required. I may be wrong in the further impression—or prejudice, shall I call it?—which I harbour on this point, seeing that force can but be force however exerted and applied; but apart from the question of mere force, it appears to me that steam, under the conditions of its application, exerts a steady giant-power that can scarcely be paralleled in its action. It is all muscle—a kind of unshorn Samson; and it is not to be entertained that the steam engine, even in its present most efficient form, has reached the limit of economy. Where moderate power, however, is required, and especially intermittent power, the gas-engine, by reason of its adaptability and handiness, is simply invaluable, and there is a

Steam and the
steam engine.

wide field for its application. The field, indeed, is wide enough to satisfy any reasonable ambition. Gas engineers are not greedy ; and in the domain of motive power, as in that of lighting, they are well content to allow other forces their deserved share.

The residual products of gas-making, though temporarily affected by the decline in prices which has overtaken almost every commodity, have proved to be a fruitful mine of variegated beauty and wealth. In the early days of gas manufacture, and for many years after, with what aversion and dislike the tar and ammoniacal liquor were looked upon and treated ! How these products were hated, and detested, and contemned, and got rid of by any and every means ! There are those amongst us old enough to remember all this. But chemistry came to the rescue, and revealed the precious treasures that, like the jewel in the toad's head, were hidden away within the dark and uninviting exterior. In the case of these compounds, the Ethiopian has verily changed his skin.

Residual products.

Has science, think you, exhausted the treasures they contain ? I, for one, do not believe it. On the contrary, I am convinced that only the hem of the garment has been touched. I am strongly of opinion that the discovery of the coal tar

Coal-tar colours.

Other
derivatives
from tar.

A new product.

colours, by diverting the current of chemical research in one special direction, has had the effect of narrowing the field of view, and so limiting for the present the number of other valuable derivatives from this many-sided material, coal tar. The question may, I think, be pertinently asked, "Why colours only—why not the bulk of the products described in the British Pharmacopœia?" Coal tar contains the four most important elements in nature—carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen—and in such condition and proportion as best to warrant their association amongst themselves, and with other elements and compounds, in almost every variety of form. As justifying this assumption, only the other day appeared the announcement of a new coal tar product, called "antipyrine," discovered by Herr Ludwig d'Erlanger, and already regarded by physicians as the most powerful agent known for reducing temperature in fevers. The discovery of the coal tar products is one of the most wonderful developments of the nineteenth century; and the valuable properties contained in coal tar, depend upon it, are almost as exhaustless as Nature herself.

Singular to say, it is now the aim of gas managers to increase the bulk of those substances which they previously contemned. This

is a result which could scarcely have been foreseen by the fathers of gas manufacture, and is a curious commentary on human wisdom. The efforts that are now being directed to securing the whole of the nitrogen contained in coal, by causing its combination with hydrogen so as to increase the yield of ammonia, are being rewarded with success. In the case of the shale used in oil works, this increase in yield has already received practical solution. In the distillation of coal for the production of illuminating gas, the difficulties in the way of increasing the yield of the ammoniacal products are more formidable. The very able paper recently contributed to the proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers by Professor Foster, and the discussion which followed thereon, point to possibilities in the production of ammonia in gasworks which, by the aid of research, there is every reason to believe, will be realised; and we may fairly anticipate that the time will come when, instead of a quantity of liquor yielding 30lbs of sulphate of ammonia per ton of coal, the production will be increased by 150 to 200 per cent.—that is to say, it will range from 75lbs. to 90lbs. of ammonium sulphate. True, the obtaining of this result implies the sacrifice of the coke, or the larger bulk of it, unless some

Nitrogen in
coal.

Ammonium
sulphate.

medium other than steam, rich in hydrogen, can be employed. But even to sacrifice the coke for this purpose would only be giving £25 for £40, taking the value of the ammonium salt at the present low market price. A study of the subject brings to light at least one fact of importance to the members of this Institute, viz., that the resources of civilisation and science are far, from being exhausted as regards the developments which may yet take place in gasworks.

Used in
agriculture.

There is scarcely room for doubt that for some time to come the increasing production of sulphate of ammonia will have the effect of keeping down the market value of that material, and will thus adversely affect the revenue of gasworks. On the other hand, the demand for nitrogenous compounds in agriculture is growing apace, and will continue to grow; and we may expect to see an early improvement in prices. Again, with the return of prosperity to agriculture and trade, which will assuredly come sooner or later—rather soon than late—it is reasonable to predict that the prices of residuals will participate in the general rise. But whether this be so or not, it is a matter for congratulation in which the members of this Institute sincerely join, that an obvious and

grievous cause of waste is being removed; and to such extent the country and the world are richer.

It has always appeared to me, however, that to attribute the fall in prices of any commodity to over-production, without a qualification, is to lose sight of the obvious remedy. Indeed, in nearly every instance where this word "over-production" is used, it involves a fallacy, and tends to obscure the true reason. The truth is,

Over-production
a fallacy.

it is scarcely possible to have over-production in anything, whether it be in wheat, calicoes, or sulphate of ammonia. So long as there is an empty stomach, a back uncovered, or a field unfertilised, there can be no over-production in these commodities. It is the *distribution* which is at fault, clearly; and it is to this phase of the question that attention should be directed. When the value of sulphate of ammonia as a fertiliser is more widely known and appreciated, the demand will outgrow any possible supply. This knowledge is spreading; and it is to the interest of the members of the Institute to assist in its dissemination.

My friend Rufus is an enthusiast on this question of residuals; and he ventures to assert, leaving out of sight for the moment the use of gas as fuel, that it offers a solution of the smoke

The smoke
difficulty.

difficulty. All that is required to be done is to put in force the means to eradicate the nuisance that are within our power and grasp. The doing of this would not entail expense upon either the ratepayers of the town or the owners of the manufactories, who are the chief sinners in this matter of smoke production; on the contrary, the present system of consuming coal for steam raising, and for other purposes, is as wasteful as it is indefensible, whilst the method that is immediately available would be economical and profitable. The belching forth of dense volumes of black smoke from chimneys is a disgrace to our nineteenth century progress and civilisation. How is its suppression to be accomplished without injuring the interests of trade? The machinery for its successful accomplishment is already to hand in every town in the Kingdom. We have only to utilise our existing gasworks to their full capacity, both in summer and winter, and extend them as occasion requires. As at present managed, three-fourths of the plant of most gasworks in manufacturing towns lies idle for about one-half the year. This represents a serious waste of productive power, as well as interest on capital. Now, if all the coal which is used, say, in the large manufactories of each town, instead of being conveyed

Its solution.

direct to those manufactories for consumption in the present wasteful and barbarous manner, were taken first to the gasworks to be *purified* from its smoke-producing ingredients—in other words, were converted into coke, and then distributed to the manufactories—it would be as efficient for the purpose of steam-raising as coal, and immunity from smoke would be attained. In this way the present unutilised plant of the gasworks would be employed throughout the season of reduced lighting. The gas produced would be used for heating the retorts, and the revenue arising from the other products would defray the cost of the conversion process, and leave a substantial profit. That is my friend Rufus's view of the smoke question and its remedy; and I give it to you for what it is worth.

The remedy for
the smoke
nuisance.

After all, this is no vague, unsubstantial dream. The thing is already being carried out at the works of the Colne Vale Gas Company, at Longwood, near Huddersfield, on a small scale, but to such an extent and with so much success, as to warrant its wider adoption.* Mr. Midgley, the manager of the Colne Vale Works, informs me

Application of
the remedy.

* For a description of the Colne Vale Works and the system adopted there, see the "Proceedings of the Manchester District Institution of Gas Engineers" for August, 1884.

The remedy
applied.

as the result of his experience, that the coke obtained from a ton of bituminous coal will raise as much steam in an ordinary Lancashire boiler as the ton of coal itself; but that the coke will do 15 per cent more than the coal in boilers specially constructed for coke firing, with a larger grate-bar area.

Restoration of
spent lime.

The only residual which can be said to give annoyance and trouble to the gas manager, and which he still has a horror of seeing, is the spent lime of the purifiers. Mr. Hislop's process for restoring the material, so that it can be used again and again, has now stood the test of time; and no manager need hesitate to adopt it who is troubled with the nuisance of spent lime, and can see a profit, however small, in its conversion. I wish also to call attention to the manufacture of cement from furnace slag and the spent lime of gasworks, recently introduced by Mr. Frederick Ransome. This is called "Ransome or Slag Cement," and was described in *Engineering*, in January last. I need not give the particulars of the manufacture, as these can be obtained on reference to that journal, or to the *Journal of Gas Lighting* for the same month; suffice it to say that, on being submitted to the test, the Ransome cement was found to possess a strength nearly 50 per cent. greater than that of Portland cement,

Ransome
cement.

whilst it can be produced at half the cost of that material.

The question of regeneration, as applied to the firing of gas retorts, has engaged attention for several years past, but during the last twelve months there has been a culmination of interest in the subject—as the pages of the *Journal of Gas Lighting* testify—due to the views expressed by Mr. Valon at the meeting of the Institute in June last.

Broadly and succinctly stated, Mr. Valon's views of the question, founded on lengthened experience and observation, are that, whilst it is of importance to bring back the waste gases as they escape from the setting, and cause them to circulate amongst the brickwork at the base of the retort bench in such a manner as to insulate the furnace, and so maintain its intensity, any system of tortuous flues for the heating of the secondary air is unnecessary. That—carrying this opinion into practice—his arrangement of the furnace and its surroundings is simplified, and consequently is less costly; whilst he obtains results equal to what are obtained from the more intricate and expensive methods of so-called regeneration. Further, that the term "regeneration," as so applied, is a misnomer, and that a more accurate definition of the process or arrangement would be "restoration."

Regenerative
Furnaces.

Mr. Valon's
views.

I concur with these views. Indeed, I go farther; but of this more anon. Had Mr. Valon rested here, his position would have been invulnerable. It was only when he endeavoured to account for the results he had obtained that he fell into error, and laid himself open to his critics. It is well known that dry air is diathermanous to radiant heat—that is to say, the rays of heat pass through it without raising it in temperature. Seizing upon this fact, Mr. Valon argued that the air, under ordinary atmospheric conditions, in its passage through the hot flues to the combustion chamber of the retort-setting, is not heated—except to a slight extent, due to the moisture contained in it. Here he was wrong, as was clearly shown by Mr. Harold B. Dixon in his experiments, undertaken to elucidate the fact, and by the subsequent labours of Mr. W. Gadd, as set forth in his series of remarkable articles in the *Journal of Gas Lighting*. Although air is diathermanous to radiant heat, it is raised in temperature when brought into contact with hot surfaces. The mistake was a pardonable one in a man pre-occupied with other absorbing duties. Moreover, there is no Treatise extant which deals with the subject; and when it is referred to at all in standard works on heat, it is never with that

The heating of
air.

thoroughness and lucidity so desirable in an inquiry of such importance. Furthermore, the extreme rapidity with which air, under favourable conditions, takes up and parts with heat, necessitates delicacy in the apparatus, and skill and experience in the methods adopted to determine the point. Mr. Valon's critics, instead of controverting, or endeavouring to controvert, his facts, dealt with his reasons for those facts; and thus the true issue was obscured for a time, and the discussion rendered less profitable than would otherwise have been the case.

Mr. Valon's
critics.

With Mr. Valon's contention on the real point at issue I am in accord. It is not, in my opinion, to the system of tortuous air passages that the advantages of so-called regeneration are due, but to the circumstance that the heat of the waste gases is at a potential higher than that to which the body of brickwork in the base of the setting, in the absence of the waste-gas flues, could possibly attain. The effect of this is to insulate the heat of the furnace, and minimise radiation and conduction therefrom. Heat, like water and electricity, tends to establish an equilibrium; and the lower the temperature of a body in contact with another at a higher temperature, the greater the abstraction of heat from the latter. If it were possible,

Conservation of
heat.

Attenuation of
air by heating.

therefore, to enclose the heated ovens of a retort-stack within an envelope of heat, it is obvious that the heat of the oven would be conserved, and that economy of fuel would result. To the extent which this insulation by means of heat is applied to the furnaces in gas-works, such saving of fuel as is effected is due, and not to the heating of the secondary air. It is possible, indeed, to conceive that the heating of the air has a contrary effect in a bench of retorts to that hitherto supposed. The air in regenerator furnaces under ordinary chimney drag, on attaining the high temperature, is so attenuated as probably to prevent the supply of oxygen necessary for perfect combustion; and I have been gradually forced to the conclusion that, given adequate insulation by the waste heat, as I have explained, combustion would be more perfect, and an equal or better heat attainable at a less expenditure of fuel, with the secondary air supplied at normal atmospheric temperature. (The conditions of hot-blast furnaces for iron smelting are obviously different, the air being supplied under pressure.) There is evidence, indeed, that such would be the case. Mr. Dixon, in one of the able and highly instructive lectures on "The Use of Coal Gas," delivered by him at the Society of Arts at the

Mr. Dixon's
lectures.

end of last year, refers to the circumstance that the admission of a supply of cold air to the flame of the Bower regenerative lamp increases its illuminating power. This is a significant fact; and, as was pointed out to me at the time by my friend Mr. Gadd, the improved effect is due to the circumstance that, before the cold air is admitted, the combustion is imperfect, owing doubtless to the attenuation of the heated air, as already explained.

On the misapplication of the term "regeneration" in this connection, a word should be said. Assuming the correctness of the views now enunciated, it is evident that the function fulfilled by the heat of the waste gases is in no sense regenerative. Their temperature is necessarily much lower than that of combustion and the temperature of the setting. Now, heat can never travel from a lower to a higher potential (as well expect water to run up-hill); how, then, is it possible by the lower temperature to "regenerate" the higher? As a matter of fact, it cannot possibly do so. The function of the waste heat is, by insulation, to *conserve* the heat generated by combustion; and, therefore, the logical definition or description of the furnace in question is "Conservator Furnace."

Misapplication
of the term
"regeneration."

In concluding my reference to this important

Mr. Valon's
services.

subject, it is only just and fitting to acknowledge the service which Mr. Valon has rendered to the gas profession by his labours in the retort-house. He may have made mistakes—who has not?—but he has set an example, in his method of independent investigation, which might be widely imitated with advantage. Like most original inquirers the result of whose labours runs counter to preconceived opinions, Mr. Valon has had to suffer strong opposition, and even ridicule. The good service he has done, however, will be more widely appreciated every year; and he deserves our warm thanks for the patient, and persistent, and courageous way in which he has pursued his inquiries and acknowledged his mistakes.

Tyndall on the
scientific spirit.

We have been in the habit of taking things too much for granted. The scientific spirit has been largely wanting amongst us. As Tyndall finely says: "It is a menial spirit which afflicts the seekers after natural knowledge when they forsake that fountain of living waters, the direct appeal to Nature by observation and experiment, and give themselves up to the remanipulation of the notions of their predecessors. . . . The acceptance of mere authority in science always leads to intellectual death."* It is by

* Belfast Address ; eighth edition, p. 12.

personal experiment and research that progress in the arts is insured. To be acquainted with a subject from the reading of books is one thing ; but to have probed that subject to the core, by actual experiment and observation, is quite another thing. It is this latter method which stamps the man, whoever he be, as an original thinker and worker, and raises him to a pinnacle high above those whose knowledge is book-learned or lecture-learned only. But I might put it even stronger than this ; I might say with truth that until we acquire the habit of thinking and experimenting for ourselves, we are not capable of receiving, much less of digesting, even the knowledge which is to be found in books.

Observation
versus
book-learning.

The English gas manager maintains his position and reputation abroad. Outside the Continent—and even there to some extent—in our colonies, in most countries civilised and semi-civilised, the gas manager is a native of the British Isles. He is fortunate in having a wide field from which to choose at discretion. With John Wesley he might say, “The world is my parish.” This is flattering to our insular character, and complimentary to our native ability and enterprise.

Gas
management
abroad.

To those of our younger men who may be

Hints to
managers.

Necessity
compels and
enables.

Sobriety of
foreign
workmen.

contemplating a foreign engagement when the opportunity comes in their way, I, who have had experience of that kind, may give a few hints. Gas management abroad has its advantages and disadvantages. A few years spent in that position is a fine discipline for a young man, and proves the metal of which he is made. He is thrown largely on his own resources. If a Holder breaks down, he cannot wire to London or Birmingham or Leeds for workmen to be sent down the following day to put matters to rights. Necessity compels, but it also enables, him to perform the work himself with such men and materials as may be at his command. The gas manager abroad should therefore be a good all-round man in his profession; and, in addition, he should be a financier and something of a diplomatist, whilst he must have infinite patience at command in dealing with Government officials, who have a power of interference, and usually exercise it, under the concession. He will find good and intelligent workmen abroad as well as at home; and he will not be harassed by the drunken class. Whether he go east or west, sobriety is a pleasant characteristic in the foreign labourer, which covers a multitude of other defects. He should be honourable and straightforward in all his dealings with all with whom

he is brought in contact, and especially with the workmen under his charge; courteous, and even kindly and sympathetic, when occasion requires. These qualities, coupled with the name of Englishman, will carry him triumphantly through most difficulties. Climatic considerations need not deter him if he has a cool head and is temperate in his habits. There are few worse climates than our own, and most foreign climates are incomparably superior. Of course, no man should go abroad except under an engagement made at home. To go out on speculation is a mistake.

Climatic considerations.

The general working in gasworks abroad does not differ materially from our own. In the tropics condensation can be effected with the utmost ease and efficiency by resorting to evaporation, by the sun's heat, of thin streams of water trickling down the exposed surface of the condenser pipes. The holders require special attention when nearing the top in cloudy weather, as a burst of hot sunshine will, by causing expansion of the contained gas, raise them two or three feet in an incredibly brief space of time. The ammoniacal liquor is usually a drug, and is run to waste. This, however, is scarcely justifiable; going abroad with my present knowledge I would seek to remedy this wasteful state of

Utilisation of residuals.

Tar firing.

things. One-half the tar produced I was able to sell; the other half I used as fuel to heat the retorts. During five years I kept two benches of sevens constantly fired with tar; the only difficulty in its use being to moderate the intense local heat which it gives out in combustion. By using the tar in this way I was able to economise coke, which commanded a ready sale at a good price. Here in England we have to encounter complaints from consumers of alleged impurity in the gas, when the faults are really due to the lack of ventilation in the rooms where it is consumed. This is an "Old Man of the Sea" which is never off the gas manager's back in this country. It is one great advantage of life in the tropics that the ventilation of rooms is a necessity, and is always attained in greater or less perfection. The result is that complaints of this kind are seldom or never made. Speaking from my own experience, I can aver that I never had a single complaint of this character.

Gas lighting and ventilation.

Gas engineering.

The vast expansion of gas lighting has given a stimulus to gas engineering; and works of this character exist, and are being constructed, the magnitude of which is not eclipsed by the other great engineering enterprises of the century.

It has been the custom of late of certain writers and speakers to say that the recent advent

of the electric light has had the effect of infusing new life into the action of the gas authorities of the kingdom. The truth of that assertion I dispute. Undoubtedly the introduction of the electric light in its recent development has led to a demand on the part of the public for more light in the streets and other thoroughfares of our cities and towns. The cry has awakened the authorities of such towns and cities, who control the public lighting, from the lethargic state into which they had sunk; and gas engineers, as they were always ready to do, have responded to the demand, and are still prepared to go as far in that direction as the public desire.

The electric
light.

Whilst on this subject, I may be allowed to express the opinion that competition by the electric light in England under existing circumstances is out of the question. Even in countries where gas is sold at 20s. per 1,000 cubic feet, electricity stands but little chance with gas as an illuminant; and how then can it possibly compete with gas at, say 2s. 6d. or 3s. per 1,000? The suggestion may be dismissed as absurd. We are, of course, aware that there are other considerations besides that of mere cost. One of the recommendations of the electric light is that it gives out little or no heat. By one person in a thousand this may be deemed an advantage;

Electricity
versus gas.

but I have yet to learn that the grateful warmth of the gas-flame is objectionable. Stuffy, ill-ventilated rooms are an evil; but it is one for which the architect is to blame, and which the heat of the gas-flame can, and will yet, be more largely made the means of alleviating.

Installations.

With scarcely an exception the installations we have had of the electric light in this country for the illumination of extended areas, instead of being testimonials in its favour, have been just so many condemnations of it. They have gone largely to prove how far it is at present from being a dependable and useful light; and they have also revealed how much of ignorance and presumption were concealed beneath the language of *dilettante* scientists, who talked glibly of parcelling out our towns into electrical lighting areas for the benefit of hungry companies. It makes one ashamed to look back to the time when the Parliamentary Committee on the electric light was sitting, and remember the exaggerated and harmful nonsense that was spoken on the subject by men styling themselves leaders in science. I cannot help contrasting their behaviour with that of George Stephenson in the earlier years of the century, when placed in a similar position in the witness-chair of a Commons' Committee. An honourable member

Dilettante
scientists.

put the question to him, with a grave face and in an incredulous tone, "Now, Mr. Stephenson, do you really think you will be able to run your locomotive engines at a speed of twelve miles an hour?" "Yes," replied the great engineer, "I believe we shall be able eventually to run them at a speed of *twenty* miles an hour." That was a modest boast, as he had proved the fact before, and he kept well within his actual experience; the others palavered about something of which they were profoundly ignorant.

George
Stephenson as a
witness.

That word "installation," by the way, is a high-sounding word, and catches the ear of the unwary; but it is not business, and unfortunately it grates on the ears of a good many sufferers. We usually associate the idea of stability and permanence with the word installation. We speak, for example, of the installation of a bishop; and when the act or ceremony of installation has been completed, the said bishop begins to fulfil and continues to fulfil his functions, and perform the duties of his office with continuity and some degree of success, if not always with perfect success—for even bishops are not perfect—yet with such measure of efficiency as poor human nature is capable of. But electrical lighting installations hitherto, with but rare exceptions, and these in isolated buildings, have been synonymous with failure.

A high-sounding
word.

Quackery and
pretension.

It is not in an assemblage of gas engineers that scientific discovery and progress will fail to meet with due recognition. They view the electric light neither with envious nor unfriendly eyes. It is only the quackery and pretension which are associated with it that call forth their animadversions ; and to these, not a moment too soon, the eyes of the public have been opened. If I might presume to act the part of candid friend of the electricians, I would say—as I said at the very beginning, when the wonders of the dynamo were first displayed—that until you can accumulate and freely distribute a reserve of electrical force, your method of lighting can never prove a success. Engines and belting are not to be depended on, even when they are in duplicate. In short, what electricians should aim at is to make their light as *staying* as gas light. When they succeed in making the electric light as *staying*, they will have within their grasp the power of making it as *paying* as gas light ; but, in my humble opinion, not before.

Storage and
distribution of
electrical force.

I am not going to say—what it has become the custom to say—that this spoilt child has “a great future before it” in the illumination of our towns and their innumerable dwellings. That to me is not at all apparent. If I saw any

signs of the fact, assuming it to be a fact, I would be justified in saying, and I would say, that I believe it has a great future before it in that respect. With all the circumstances before us, however—the lengthy record of failure and disaster—it is a mode of talking about things which I do not care to adopt. Doubtless it might be considered the better part of valour to venture on a prophecy of the kind, though it is only a mercenary way of making the best of both lights, as Mr. Facing-both-ways tries to make “the best of both worlds.” It boils the hard peas of criticism, and saves one’s scientific reputation; and then it casts the glamour of the seer about one’s speech to profess to look far ahead into the future. I prefer to view the hard facts of the present; to use these as my text, and to put the question, “Show us your credentials!” Aerial navigation may have a great future before it. There are enthusiasts who have been predicting that for a century; at present it is not very apparent that it has. To say that a thing has “a great future before it,” is often a way of saying that it is a present failure, and that is hardly complimentary. If I were an electrician I would say, “Spare us patronage of that kind.”

A great future.

Aerial
navigation.

The solution of the standards of light question,

Standards of
light.

on which a valuable report by Messrs. Heisch and Hartley was obtained by the Gas Institute twelve months ago, has made some, though not rapid, progress during the past year. This is not surprising, as the subject is one of difficulty; not so much because a trustworthy standard does not exist, as from the fact that, owing to the inherent technical character of the subject, a strongly-expressed public opinion cannot be brought to bear upon it; and also from the suggestion that the average gas consumer would, it is surmised, be suspiciously dubious of the application of a new unit of light measurement.

The proposed pentane or air-gas standard of Mr. Vernon Harcourt, and some of the other suggested standards, are both ingenious and beautiful, and in the hands of a skilled and careful operator are fairly trustworthy. It must be evident, however, to those who have given attention to the subject, that they lack the important elements of readiness and simplicity in application; and this alone will act as a bar to their adoption.

An
exemplification.

Let me exemplify this. Here is a carpenter who is deft at his art, and can handle his tools with a power and precision which enable him to turn out work expeditiously and in quantity. These tools of his require to be sharpened occa-

sionally; and although a portion of his time is so taken up, yet it is but a small portion of his whole working time. Imagine his having to employ tools in his work, the preparation and setting of which occupied an extraordinary amount of attention. He would soon conclude that such a diversion of energy from the main object of his business was intolerable; and he would cast about him for something which, whilst enabling him to do his work equally well, would absorb less of his thought and supervision. If, instead of a carpenter, he were a gas examiner, the same reasoning would apply. By almost any of the suggested standards he could gauge the illuminating power of the gas; but an undue proportion of his attention and time would be taken up in the sharpening and setting of his tools, so to speak; and he would turn with avidity to something defter and handier, if it were more efficient and authorised.

Sharpening and
setting of tools.

The Methven standard solves the difficulty. It is a long stride in advance of any other standard in existence, or that has been suggested. It is more beautiful and ingenious than the pentane; and it has all the merit of simplicity, and handiness, and directness to recommend it. Indeed, its qualities in these respects are such that it is scarcely possible to imagine the possi-

The Methven
compared with
other standards.

bility of improving upon it. The candle, the pentane, and other flames bear the same relation to the Methven that a relaxed cord does to one that is strung and stretched. The Methven has no gossamer fringe like the candle and other flames. It is strong and star-like from inside to edge, as it must necessarily be, seeing that it is virtually a piece clipped from the centre of the gas-flame. The candle standard, which is the authorised one in this country, is simple enough if it were trustworthy; but even the candle, in addition to its other faults, consumes time as well as sperm. It will never do to consume more time and attention still in the use of the standard of the future. Patience is fast becoming a lost virtue. Men aim at economising time and energy in these days, and they do right: it is only another way of lengthening life. No other standard in use, or suggested standard, can be compared to the Methven screen and slot in value and efficiency. As for that of M. Violle, the proposed platinum standard, surely the Frenchman is a practical joker, and his object that of showing the world how even a society of *savants* can be imposed upon.

Patience: a
lost virtue.

Alleged
drawbacks.

The alleged drawbacks to the adoption of the Methven standard are trivial, and too much is attempted to be made of them. Slots of certain

defined sizes are required for different qualities of gas within a wide range. As a matter of fact, two different sized slots are all that is needed. The smaller slot is applicable to the richer Scotch gas above 22-candle power; the larger one can be employed throughout all the other parts of the kingdom. Or the testing flame may be enriched by carburation, and the one slot will suffice. Mr. Dibdin, in the course of his experiments, has found that the results obtained with the Methven standard are discrepant unless the apparatus is thoroughly warmed before using. Well, there is no reason whatever why the gas should not always be kept alight, and the apparatus maintained at the testing temperature.

The two slots.

As to the argument that the consumer could not trust it, that ought to be dismissed. Let Parliament, from the evidence of qualified witnesses, decide on its adoption, and the public will accept it without a murmur. I have heard the question asked, "How shall we standardise the standard?" That, I answer, is done already. The Methven screen affords a light through its slot equal to that of two sperm candles. If that is not considered a satisfactory answer, then I say it will be standardised the moment the Legislature determines that it shall be used as

Standardising.

the standard. It is wire-drawing to spin out the argument further. I agree with Mr. Methven in his opinion that, outside the question of standards, there is room for improvement in the photometer itself; and I trust he may be encouraged to turn his ingenious and practical mind in that direction.

Rating.

The subject of the rating of gasworks will be introduced to this meeting in a paper by Mr. William Carr. I will not anticipate by any remarks what Mr. Carr may have to advance on the question (as I am sure he will deal with it in an exhaustive manner), further than to say that the law and the decisions of the Superior Courts upon this important subject are about as anomalous and unsatisfactory as they can well be. This is admitted not only by gasworks' authorities, but by gentlemen learned in the law, by assessment committees, and by experienced professional valuers. These remarks apply equally to the rating of waterworks; the principle adopted in both cases being the same. The Town Clerk of Leeds, Mr. (now Sir) G. W. Morrison, made an attempt, during the last session of Parliament, to remedy the grievances under which towns' authorities labour in regard to the rating of the waterworks under their control, by embodying in a Bill a principle of rating which

Mr. Morrison's
Bill.

has at least the merit of severe simplicity. The Bill, though it did not pass into law—and indeed that was scarcely desirable, as it was too restricted in its aim and operation—has served to awaken attention to the question, by reason of its having again been made a subject for legislation. The whole question of rating, however, as applicable alike to water and gasworks, both in the hands of local bodies and companies, should be grasped boldly, and dealt with in such a way as to remedy the anomalies which exist, whilst not doing injustice to other contributors to the rates.

Briefly, before concluding, let me recapitulate some of the advances that have been made in gas manufacture, and in the use of gas, during the past twenty-one years of the life of the Institute. First must be named the reduction of leakage, say from an average of 16 down to 8 per cent. The immediate effect of this has been to economise coal, and to utilise land and buildings and apparatus, and consequently capital, to a greater extent, inasmuch as the increased quantity of gas sold per ton is tantamount to a reduction in the proportional weight of coal carbonised. It also admits of a greater demand for gas without an augmentation of the machinery of production. The make of gas per retort

Advances in
gas manufacture

mouthpiece has grown from an average of about 4,600 to 6,000 cubic feet per day—the result being a further economy in land, buildings, and apparatus, greater purity also, unquestionably advantageous to the consumer from a sanitary point of view, and to the gas manufacturer, who is enabled to secure the whole of the by-products for sale. Then there is the development of the illuminating power of gas to the extent, on the average, of not less than 30 per cent.; notably by the efforts of Mr. Sugg and Mr. Bray, twin geni of the lamp—rivals in trade doubtless, but the mutual friends of the gas manufacturer, who esteems the work of both; and due, also, to the remarkable inventions in burners of Herr Siemens, Messrs. Grimston, Thorp, Bower, Clamond, Wenham, and others; not to mention the magnificent lights introduced for lighthouse use by Mr. Wigham and Sir James Douglass. Last, but by no means least, there is the development which is taking place in the use of gas outside of mere lighting, for domestic and trade purposes, through the efforts of a host of inventors. Where there is so much vitality we can afford to listen with wondering pity, not unmixed with contempt, to the prognostications of interested or blinded prophets of coming evil for the gas industry. The progress that has

been made during the past twenty-one years in the knowledge of the processes of gas manufacture has been very great; perhaps no one outside the profession, or even the younger members of it, can form an idea of the advance that has taken place. Gas manufacture has become more of an exact science, and most gas engineers of repute have added not only to their engineering skill but to their knowledge of physics and practical chemistry. At the same time there is no one more ready than the able and intelligent gas manager to admit how little is yet really known of the process of carbonisation, and how illimitable is the field of inquiry.

Progress in
manufacture.

Well, gentlemen, the conclusion at which we must arrive is that the gas industry, notwithstanding the reduced value of residuals, is healthier at the present moment than it has ever been in the past; and we may feel assured that it has a bright future before it. The usefulness of coal gas, apart from its light-giving properties, is only just beginning to be realised; and the more that gas is used for domestic and trade purposes, the greater will be the benefit to mankind in the reduction of smoke, and the consequent brightening of the atmosphere of our towns. It has long ago come to be an acknowledged truism that the introduction of

The conclusion
of the whole
matter.

A sign of
advancing
civilisation.

gas lighting amongst a community is a sure sign of advancing civilisation (I allude now more particularly to its adoption in foreign and out-of-the-way towns); and perhaps I might say further, that there is no greater civiliser in a country than a good and abundant supply of artificial light.

Thanks and an
apology.

I conclude with a word of thanks and an apology—thanks for your kindness in placing me in the honourable position which I occupy this day, and an apology for having treated in my address of matters with which you are mostly well familiar. My justification must be that the President of an Institute of this character, in his address, speaks to a wider audience than does the reader of a technical paper; and it is in every way desirable that the outside public should hear what the gas world has to say on the subjects in which it and the public are mutually interested.

JAMES LEACH, THE LANCASHIRE
COMPOSER.

James Leach.

Song—whether the word is employed to signify the poetry or the music, and whether sacred or secular—holds a prominent place amongst all civilised communities, and exerts an

ameliorating influence on our lives. Singular to say, music, which is the most luxurious of the arts, has a stimulating and invigorating effect on the animal spirits. This is true as regards both the singer and performer, and the mere listener, who at his ease enjoys the entrancing melody. Music is to the spirits what a breath of upland air is to the body—bracing and health-giving. The study and enjoyment of music are not only compatible with, but are an aid to, hard daily labour.

Music : its effects.

In no part of England has the musical art been more cultivated, or even at the present day is music more appreciated, than in the two northern counties of Yorkshire and Lancashire. The interpretation of musical thought and expression, it is true, is now left more to the professional singer and performer, and people crowd to the concert hall to listen to the strains as rendered by the cultured exponent of musical language. In former days the practice of music was more of a subjective pursuit. The people themselves were to a greater extent than now the exponents of the art in which they delighted. Like the woven fabrics of the time, much of their music was home-made, and nearly all their power of interpreting the compositions of the great masters was of home growth and nurture; and

Music in Lancashire and Yorkshire.

Music and the people.

if in those the superficial gloss of the later day was wanting, there was generally more of verve and earnestness in the singer, and of substance in the music, with a blessed freedom from adulteration.

The immediate subject of my remarks is James Leach, the Lancashire composer, and it is to psalmody, in the domain of which he was a master, that I shall speak. Deeply impressed with the rich fulness and beauty of Leach's hymn tunes, I have collected together such particulars of the composer, his life and works, as I have been able to glean from the scanty sources that are now available. Though the facts presented are meagre, it has not been without difficulty that even these have been gathered.

Psalmody past
and present.

The hymn tunes of an earlier time are in many respects different in character to those of to-day. They beget a warmer personal interest, and we enter more readily into their spirit and purpose. If they are less polished and sedate, they appeal with greater power to the intelligence, not less than to the imagination, and they touch the feelings in a higher degree. The dreary monotony of many of our modern psalm and hymn tunes is simply indescribable; their extreme characteristic in this respect is their salvation. It almost required a touch of genius to call them

Modern psalm
and hymn
tunes.

into existence. They affect a prudishness that is incompatible with deep and earnest devotion; they are so cut and dried, and rounded, and polished, to suit phlegmatic and unemotional worshippers, that nearly everything like character is effaced from them. In short, they have been toned down with the smoothing-iron of conventional taste and fastidiousness to harmonise with the idea now taught, and with which society is largely permeated, that anything like a display of enthusiasm is a mark of ill-breeding. Cut and dried.

Perhaps it might be possible to take exception on somewhat similar grounds to a few of the tunes of former times. To some extent that may be so; but even as regards the most commonplace of those that have survived the test of time, there is a kindly warmth, as of a living heart beating within them. That quality, in the highest degree, I claim for the hymn tunes of James Leach, whose name is known to most of us, though it is scarcely preserved and held in that esteem which it deserves to be. The name and memory of Leach should be cherished in Lancashire, for he was one of her gifted sons. Leach's hymn tunes.

James Leach was born in the year 1762, at Wardle, a village near to and almost a suburb of Rochdale. He came of humble parents, and his education, so far as schooling is concerned,

Sunday schools.

Edwin Waugh
and Leach's
tunes.

was of the scantiest possible kind. He did not even enjoy the advantage of attending a Sunday school in his younger years, though later on, as such schools began to be generally established throughout the country, he took an active personal interest in them; his hymn tunes and anthems were eagerly adopted and sung therein, and these materially assisted in making Sunday schools the success which they eventually became. He was early apprenticed to the trade of hand-loom weaving, which he continued to follow till well into the years of manhood. It is a pleasant circumstance to note that he was the maternal uncle of the mother of our Lancashire poet, Edwin Waugh, who, in his "Roads Out of Manchester," tells us that often, when a lad, he used to listen to his mother singing Leach's plaintive tunes when there was nobody in the house but his little sister and himself. The poet, indeed, in his published works, often speaks of Leach in kindly and endearing words. In the sketches referred to he says further:—

"My mother's relatives, both on the father's and mother's side, were all ardent lovers of music. . . . They were all proud of their relative, James Leach, the composer of the "Psalmody," and I can well remember that in those days of my early youth, when I accompanied my mother to her native village, and we went from one house to another amongst her kinsfolk, I have often heard them sing and play James Leach's touching melodies, with tears in their eyes. I remember some of these tunes still, and I think I shall never forget them."

Whether Leach ever received special instruction in the musical art is not known, but it is unlikely that he did, as he himself states that when he began to write his tunes he was ignorant of the rules of composition. Be that as it may, however, he was naturally gifted as a musician, and he was able to cultivate his powers in this direction at the frequent meetings for musical practice of his kinsmen and neighbours. In those days it was the custom of the people living in the villages, and scattered over the hillsides and valleys of Lancashire, to meet in each other's houses by turns to practise sacred and secular music. I have elsewhere described such meetings amongst the "Deyghn Layrocks," and Waugh, in his "Old Man's Memories," alludes to the same pleasant custom. He says:—

A self-taught musician.

Waugh's memories.

"My mother's relatives seem to have been, almost all of them, natural musicians ; and it was their custom to go in a body to each other's houses in turn to practise sacred music at certain set times. I remember some of these musical gatherings at which I was present when I was young."

And, as showing the musical enthusiasm that was evinced amongst working people in those days, he remarks, in reference to his grandfather, William Howorth, who was a stonemason, that,

"After he had finished a hard day's work, it was not an uncommon thing for him to *stand* at a tall desk, in a recess by the window, copying passages from the great composers, until far on

"Billy-w'ith'-pipes."

into the morning. . . . Amongst his moorland neighbours he was reckoned a good player on more instruments than one ; but his favourite instrument seems to have been the hautboy, and he became familiarly known all over his neighbouring hills by the name of 'Billy-wi'th'-Pipes.' "

Leach as an
instrumentalist.

Such being the habits of the times, when men had more leisure and less distraction of mind than now, it is certain that Leach would enter into them with zest, and so by constant practice cultivate his natural gifts. He early attained proficiency as an instrumentalist, and was appointed one of the performers in the "King's Band." As a vocalist he rose to distinction both as a teacher and choir leader, and as a counter-tenor singer he was prominent in the great musical festivals held in Westminster Abbey and elsewhere.

A bright cluster.

But it is as a composer of psalm and hymn tunes that he best deserves to be remembered. Some of his choicest compositions were produced when he was a young man between the ages of twenty-two and twenty-seven. Of these I may specially mention "Mount Pleasant," "Oldham," "Bethel," "New Trumpet," "Melody," "Pisgah," "Sabbath," and "Shepherd's Lover." In all the range of devotional tunes in existence, I venture to say there are few finer than those I have named—a bright cluster, indeed, with an originality and character all their own, full of

the richest melody, and capable of elevating the soul to the highest devotional worship. Pleasant are the memories associated with these strains of James Leach ; warm, sunny recollections of days gone by come unbidden as we croon them over. So full are they of that indefinable power to cheer and compose the mind, it can only be a source of unalloyed regret that in these times of turmoil and struggle they should have been pushed aside for less-enduring and more commonplace themes.

Leach's first volume of sacred music was published in 1789. He was then twenty-seven years of age. In the preface to the volume, dated Rochdale, June 29, 1789, he says :—

Leach's first volume.

"Having had a turn for music from my infancy, I have employed my leisure hours in cultivating the same. A few years ago I composed a few tunes, and without the least design of their being made public, being at the time ignorant of the rules of composition. These few tunes accordingly got handed about, and were introduced into many congregations, insomuch that I was called upon from all quarters for copies, so that I found myself under the disagreeable necessity of denying many requests of that kind. For, having a family to maintain with my hand labour, I had already spent more time than I could well spare ; but a friend of mine, knowing my importunities of that kind, and wishing the tunes to be more generally known, advised me by all means to compose a few more to some select pieces, and let a number of them be struck off, as the price would be small, so that such as wished to have them might procure them at a small expense ; and therefore I now submit them to the judgment of the public—I mean such as understand music."

The preface.

The book—the first edition of which is now very scarce—is oblong quarto, of fifty-eight pages, and contains twenty-two hymn tunes, and two long pieces with instrumental accompaniments. The friend to whom Leach alludes, and who gave him pecuniary assistance in bringing out his work, was Mr. James Hamilton, who, along with others, first established Sunday schools in Rochdale.

His second
volume.

Some years later, probably about 1797, he issued a second volume, larger than the first. This had been promised earlier, but, as he remarks in the preface—

“The poverty occasioned by the present war put a check upon my design, for it is to be noted that I, like many of my brethren in the musical line, am not troubled with much wealth.”

It is evident that Leach took infinite pains to perfect his melodies before they left his hands, and he was jealous of any attempts on the part of others to alter or improve them. Against such interference he indulges in strong language. He says in the same preface:—

“In my first work I requested that no one would attempt the altering of my tunes, but let them run just as they are.
Music-menders. . . . In a general way we may say of music-menders what is vulgarly said of tinkers—in attempting to repair one hole they often make two. Pedantry in every department is ridiculous, and full as much in music as in any other science, and often proves injurious to the original composer. . . . I have seen excellent tunes so mangled and disfigured by self-conceited

improvers, that they have left them like the man who fell among thieves, stripped and wounded, *even half dead*. I would here particularly remark that the Old Hundredth Psalm tune has latterly undergone a metamorphosis of this sort, which has left it neither spirit nor life. If a man is capable of improving the work of another, he is certainly capable of composing himself; and if so, let him build upon his own ground, and if there be any merit in his work, let him wear the honour."

Effects of their work.

The second volume consists of sixty-nine pages, in oblong quarto like the other, and contains forty-eight tunes and three longer pieces. In this volume are included the well-known melodies — "Redemption," "Smyrna," "St. John," "Aphek," "Pastoral," "Harmony," "Peru," and others equally meritorious. I am not aware that anything further of Leach's was published during his life time, save a second edition of the first volume. Shortly after the issue of his first book, he relinquished his trade of hand-loom weaving, and devoted himself to the profession of music, as a teacher, singer, and composer, in the town of Rochdale. About the year 1795 or 1796 he removed with his family to Salford, as affording a more extended sphere for his talents, and here he remained down to the time of his death.

A professor of music.

This melancholy event occurred on Thursday evening, February 8, 1798, he being only thirty-six years of age, in the full plenitude of his powers, and rising rapidly into fame. The Leeds

Leach's death.

coach, in which he was a passenger from Rochdale on his way to Manchester, was overturned when about half-way down Entwistle Brow, near to the village of Blackley, and Leach was thrown from it and killed. The following notice of the accident appears in the *Manchester Mercury* of Tuesday, February 13, 1798 :—

“On Thursday evening, Mr. James Leach, of Salford, musician, was killed by the overturning of a chaise caused by a wheel coming suddenly off. He has left a large family to lament his loss.”

His resting place.

After his death an edition of the volume containing the second set of tunes was published, in which an advertisement appears stating that the sudden death of Mr. Leach had reduced his family to very necessitous circumstances, announcing the names of a committee of gentlemen who had undertaken the publication of his manuscript tunes and anthems for the benefit of his widow and children, and soliciting subscribers thereto. Leach was buried in the graveyard of Union Street Wesleyan Chapel, Rochdale, and the stone which marks the spot is surmounted by his well-known short-metre tune, “Egypt,” in G minor.

His set pieces and anthems were collected together and issued in twelve parts, making a volume of two hundred and fifty-six pages, oblong folio. Various editions of his works were

afterwards printed in this country and in the United States; and in most of the collections of sacred music issued within the present century the hymn tunes of Leach hold a prominent place. Many of them have attained the widest and most deserved popularity, and to this day are prized by all who can appreciate and enjoy genuine melody. Strange to say, however, some of the very finest of his tunes are not included in other collections, and are therefore almost unknown to the present generation. The Americans have, perhaps, shown more appreciation of Leach than his own countrymen. In an interesting letter in the *Musical Times* of 1st April, 1878, the writer, who signs himself G. A. C., states that—

Posthumous
publications.

American
appreciation
of Leach's
music.

"In the 'Bridgewater Collection of Sacred Music,' first edition, printed in Boston in 1802, are 'Hampton,' 'Wilderness,' 'Bridgewater,' 'Fountain,' 'Hamilton,' 'Morning Flower,' and 'Sepulchre;' and in a book called 'David Companion, or the Methodist Standard,' the compilation of which was ordered by the General Conference at Baltimore, May 26th, 1808, and which was registered as copyright, July 28th, 1810, are forty-eight pieces of music by James Leach. From that time forward Leach's tunes were included in most of the American collections."

Some of his anthems, of which he composed no fewer than thirty-three, many of them with accompaniments for the horn, corno, oboe, violin, violoncello, and organ, are of great excellence and power. Of these I may specially name

Anthems.

"Crucifixion," set to the hymn, "When I survey the wondrous cross;" "Nativity," "Lift up your heads in joyful hope;" "Canaan,"* "Happy beyond description he;" "Animation," "Begin the high celestial strain;" "Emanuel," "Burst, ye em'rald gates."

Many of the choruses to the others are full of striking originality and resource. Taken as a whole, however, it may be admitted that they are not equal in merit to his hymn tunes. This is largely due to the circumstance that, owing to his early and sudden death, they had not received the finishing touches which would undoubtedly have been given to them had the composer's life been longer spared.

Estimate of
Leach's genius.

In the work of Mr. Thomas Hirst on "The Music of the Church," there is a generous estimate of Leach's genius, which I venture to quote from so capable an authority, and that the present sketch may be the more complete. Mr. Hirst says:—

"There is in the character of his music an identity; as painters would say, a *keeping* in the likeness; that is, in principle, not in detail; in the superintending spirit of the theme, not in the themes themselves. For in this aspect few writers present greater

* This was the first anthem composed by Leach, and it was said by a fellow-passenger on the coach that he was humming over this air when the accident, by which he met his untimely death, occurred.

variety than he, within the prescribed limits of psalmody. But, whether you turn to the solemnly-impressive strains of 'Complaint,' 'Joannas,' 'Egypt,' and 'Shields;' or plume yourselves to accompany him in 'Rochdale,' 'Syria,' or 'Redemption,' in their more free and dignified evolutions; or unite in the airy and buoyant trippings of 'Cyprus' and 'Orpheus,' you feel the presence of Leach in the unity of his commanding genius. His imagination is not so bold, adventurous, and startling as is that of some other first-rate composers; but this is counterbalanced by an addition of judgment which gives strength to the pinions of his imagination, and makes his flight more secure, and his return more certain. In him the different parts of the tune come to a friendly close, without the fear of each accusing the other of wandering too far from the melody of the theme. In his lighter effusions there is nothing of dash, or prettiness, or frivolity for the purpose of courting applause from low or vitiated tastes; and in his funeral specimens he does not sink into twaddle and unmeaning and affected croakings. . . . To say that in all Christian assemblies where devotion breaks forth in praise, Leach's tunes are worthy of a place, would be only asserting the fact, the proof of which is heard in the various and extreme parts of the militant Church. And the day is very distant when the strains of Leach will cease to stimulate the pleasures of devotion."

His tunes
worthy of a
place.

And it is finely remarked elsewhere, as quoted by Waugh, that—

"He was a man of susceptible spirit and creative mind. His style of melody is quaint and original. The general character of his tunes is that of plaintiveness and melancholy. They abound in phrases which show a keen sense of the emotional in man's nature, whether in the expression of pleasurable or painful feelings."

Who having an acquaintance with Leach's music will deny that much of the genius of his kinsman has descended to the sweet singer of

The Lancashire
poet.

our own time? Like the songs of the Lancashire poet, there is a force and directness, and withal a tenderness, in Leach's tunes that comes home to the heart with a freshness which inspires and cheers.

Fashion in
music.

Fashion in music changes like fashion in dress and other matters. We do not complain of this so long as the later fashions are equal or superior in beauty and symmetry of form to those which they have for the time being displaced. It may be said, and doubtless with truth, that some of Leach's tunes are unsuited to the taste of the æsthetic (falsely so called) worshippers of to-day, and the repetition of the lines in a few of them is a blemish not to be tolerated. To those with the old-fashioned and less sophisticated tastes, however, that is one of their strong recommendations.

Estimate of
Leach's work.

In Leach's music there is nothing random or haphazard, each note is perfectly placed, and could not be altered without jeopardising the whole strain. This proves the power of the composer. He keeps his theme well in hand, and thus every note strikes home to the intelligence as well as to the heart. The tunes of Leach are as much a work of art as a beautiful statue produced by the cunning hand of a master. They are as much a work of nature as a flowing stream, or a

quiet lake, or a deep glen embosomed in the eternal hills, and they equally fill the soul with tremulous delight and satisfying gladness. There is, besides, a wonderful variety in his compositions. Some of them are full of animation, others, again, are as sedate as Patience on her monument. Pleasurable as it is to listen to them, they must be *sung* to be thoroughly enjoyed, and they *require* singing. A sleepy, listless manner in the singer is inadmissible; but, indeed, it is also impossible. The attitude must be erect, the shoulders thrown back, and the chest expanded to do justice to their many excellencies and develope their subtle beauties. Those who are acquainted with "Redemption," "St. John," and "Pastoral" will admit the truth of this remark. What a billowy roll there is in these three noble melodies, with a power as of a mighty choir enshrined within them! His tunes in the minor key are unequalled in their strain of plaintive resignation and tenderness. To listen to them is to realise the spirit of the later autumnal winds as they murmur through the denuded boughs of the forest.

Three noble
melodies.

It will be a sad day for English musical taste when we slight the sterling qualities of Leach's psalmody, or are ashamed to confess the noble passion begotten of his strain. Leach, in his

Work that
deserves a
monument.

brief lifetime, accomplished a work that deserves a monument. The place of his birth and of his resting-place might well commemorate the man and his genius in this way, and such a display of public spirit would be honourable to its citizens. In the meantime, the republication of his "Psalmody" would make the present generation better acquainted with his music, and it would be all the happier and richer for its possession. Lancashire has good reason to be proud of her sons, and James Leach is one of them, and although no animated bust preserves his lineaments to our human sight, in his music his spirit dwells among us to this hour.

THE LAST OF THE ALE-TASTERS.

"He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again."—*Hamlet*.

The ale-taster.

The office of ale-taster, or ale-conner, as is well known, is a very ancient one, extending as far back as Saxon times. Doubtless, it had its origin with that shrewd, frugal, calculating, paunch-loving people. There is nothing of the Celtic or devil-may-care element in its character. The Celt, to this day, is too spiritualistic, too precipitate, too mercurial, to cater largely for the stomach; the Saxon is of the earth, earthy.

It was the business of those who filled the post His duties. to insure that the ale or beer brewed and sold or offered for sale within their district was good and wholesome and of the proper strength. Clearly the office was considered one of much importance in early times. The responsibility was great, and the confidence reposed in the judgment and honesty of the officer equally so. He appears to have depended chiefly, if not solely, on his fine critical taste for enabling him to decide on the quality of the beverage. Before the authorities, his evidence as against the offender was unquestioned.

The appointment of ale-taster took place His appointment. annually along with those of the greave or reeve, moor and hedge looker, hayward, bellman and officer for the Assize of Bread, at the Halmot Court of the Lord of the Honor or Manor. The oath taken by the ale-taster on assuming his duties was as follows:—

“ You shall swear that you shall well and truly Ale-taster's oath serve the King's Majesty and the Lord of this Leet in the office of ale-taster; you shall have diligent care during the time of your being in office to all the brewers and tipplers within your office, that they and every one of them do make good and wholesome ale and beer for man's body, and that the same be not sold before it be

assayed by you, and then to be sold according to the prices limited and appointed by the King's justices of the peace; and all faults committed or done by the brewers or tipplers, or by any of them, you shall make known and present the same at this court, whereby due punishment may be inflicted upon them for their offences accordingly, and in every other thing you shall well and truly behave yourself in the said office for this year to come, so help you God."

Bad ale.

In the early days the punishment for brewing and publicly exhibiting bad ale was either a fine or a two hours' seat upon the cucking or cuck stool before the culprit's own door; the drink, if pronounced by a discriminating judge to be *undrinkable*, being handed over to the poor folk.

The late Richard Taylor, of Bacup, the Rossendale ale-taster, may with propriety be described as "The last of the Ale-Tasters." As such he deserves a word of commemoration.

"Spindle Dick." "Spindle Dick" he was usually called. The writer knew him personally, and had many a confab with him. Dick and his idiosyncracies are referred to in the "History of Rossendale." Since that work was written, poor Dick has gone to render his account to a higher Court than that of the Lord of the Honor! He was a fellow of infinite humour, not wanting in sound judg-

ment, but with that kind of twist in his nature that never would allow him for two minutes at a spell to treat any subject in a serious mood. His proper calling was that of a spindle-maker, hence his sobriquet of "Spindle Dick;" a rare workman at his trade when he chose, and in his soberer hours. His character.

In his hands there was nothing incongruous or far-fetched in the office of ale-taster. Its duties, incrusting with the antiquity of centuries, came as naturally to him as though he had been living in the time of the Heptarchy, and was "to the manner born." The incongruity was when he forsook, as he occasionally did, his ale-tasting labours, and applied himself assiduously to his business of spindle-making.

Poor Dick Taylor! I always felt grateful to his personality, and to the humour which girt him round. He was a link that bound us to the past; a kind of embodied poetical idea in keeping with the ancient Forest and its traditions. I have more than half a suspicion that he must have been lying dormant for centuries in the muniment-room of Clitheroe Castle, and, like Rip Van Winkle, awoke at length to resume his interrupted duties. I never conversed with him without being carried in imagination back to bygone times, and on such occasions it was Rip Van Winkle.

with a half-resentful feeling of annoyance that the proximity of a later—shall we be justified in saying a higher?—civilisation, in the guise of a smoky factory chimney, dispelled the illusion.

Old people of
Rossendale.

After all, it is only in a district like Rossendale that such an interesting relic of the olden time could have survived. To me, when I first knew them, the old people of Rossendale always seemed to differ in many respects from the people of other districts. This was not due to any single cause—there was a variety of circumstances which contributed to the result; but the chief cause, in my opinion, is to be found in the natural character and formation of the district. By reason of its hills and the wide-reaching moorlands that environ it on every side, it was in earlier days, before the advent of the railway, removed to a large extent from contact with the outer world, and the changing fashions and tendencies of wider social conditions. The older representatives of whom I speak are fast dying out, and the younger generation has lost, or is losing, the distinguishing characteristics of the race.

A beerhouse
sign.

At one time in his career Dick kept a beerhouse, the sign over the door being a representation of the globe, with the head and shoulders of a man protruding through it, and underneath

it the legend, "Help me through this world!" By way of counteracting any bad moral effects that arose from his vending of beer on week-days, he taught a Bible-class in a room over the beershop on Sundays. He christened one of his sons "Gentleman," Gentleman Taylor, being determined, as he said, to have one gentleman in the family, whatever else.

When in discharge of the functions of his curious calling of ale-taster, Dick carried in his coat pocket a pewter gill measure of his own fashioning, of peculiar old-world shape, with a turned ebony-wood handle in the form of a cross that projected straight from the middle of the side. This symbol of his office was secured by a leathern thong about half a yard in length, one end being round the handle, the other through a button-hole in his coat. After a day's official work he might occasionally be seen, with unsteady gait, wending his way up the lane to his domicile on the hillside, with the gill measure dangling below his knee.

Dick's gill
measure.

Not unfrequently he had to appear before the Bench for being drunk and incapable, and though he was sometimes mulcted in five shillings and costs, as often as not some smart sally of wit won the admiration and sympathy of the "Great Unpaid," who let him down as softly as

Five shillings
and costs.

their sense of duty would permit. Dick, on those occasions, would declare that it was his legs only, and not his head that was drunk, which I am inclined to believe was true. He would also assert that, like a barrel, he was easily upset when only partially filled, but, when full to the bung, and end up, he was steady as a rock. As a matter of fact, however, he was not a heavy drinker, whatever his detractors may say to the contrary. His centre of gravity was displaced by a very limited supply of the beverage.

The Halmot
Court.

Regularly as the month of October came round, Dick put in an appearance at the Halmot Court of the Lord of the Manor or Honor, held at Haslingden, was reinstalled in his office with due formality, and dined with the other officials of the court when the formal business was concluded.

The following (from the "History of the Forest of Rossendale") is a copy of a memorial presented by him in October, 1864, to the Court Leet. It contains some touches of dry humour highly characteristic of the man :—

"To the Foreman and Jury of the Halmot Court at Haslingden. The respectful Memorial of your energetic Ale-Taster for Rossendale, Richard Taylor.

"Gentlemen,—From a natural bashfulness, and being unaccustomed to public speaking, which my friends tell me is a very fortunate circumstance, I am induced to lay my claims before your honourable court in writing, hoping you will give them your most favourable consideration.

The ale-taster's memorial.

"The appointment which I hold is a very ancient one, dating, as you are aware, from the time of good King Alfred, when the jury at the Court Leet appointed their head-boroughs, tithing-man, bursholder, and ale-taster; which appointments were again regulated in the time of Edward III., and through neglect this important office to a beer-imbibing population ought not to be suffered to fall into disrepute or oblivion.

"In Rossendale there are countless numbers of practical followers of the school to which that illustrious Dutchman, Mynheer Van Dunck, belonged, and while they imbibe less brandy, they make up for it in beer. To some Rossendale men, indeed, beer is meat, drink, washing, and lodging; and do away with the office of ale-taster, an inferior quality of the beverage may be sold, and the consequent waste of tissue among the working classes would be something awful to contemplate. Your honourable court,

The school of Van Dunck.

Waste of tissue.

then, cannot but perceive the vast importance of my office.

“With the spread of intelligence in Rossendale there has been a proportionate increase of licensed public-houses and beerhouses, which has created a corresponding amount of responsibility in my duties. At the time when Rossendale was in reality a forest, and a squirrel could jump from one tree to another from Sharneyford to Rawtenstall without touching the ground, the office of ale-taster was no doubt a sinecure. For three years I have upheld the dignity of your honourable court as ale-taster without emolument, stipend, fee, or perquisite of any kind. I have even been dragged before a subordinate court and fined five shillings and costs whilst fulfilling the duties of my office. My great services should receive some slight acknowledgment at your hands, and thus would be secured the upright discharge of those duties you expect me to fulfil; and my imperial gill measure, which I carry along with me as my baton of office, should bear the seal of your honourable court.

Dick's great
services.

His annual
report.

“Praying for your kind consideration, I beg to submit this my third annual Report.

“In my district are fifty-five licensed public-houses and sixty-five beerhouses. The quality

of the beer retailed at these houses is generally good, and calculated to prevent the deterioration of tissue, and I do not detect any sign of adulteration. The only complaint I have to make is of the quality of the ales sold at Newchurch during the week in which Kirk Fair is held; they are not then quite up to the mark in point of strength and flavour; but this is a specialty, and it is the only specialty that I feel bound to comment upon, excepting that which immediately concerns your obedient servant, Richard Taylor, ale-taster for that part of her Majesty's dominions known as Rossendale."

On a later occasion Mr. Taylor sent in his resignation to the court as follows:—

"To the Foreman and Jury of the Halmot Court at Haslingden,—Gentlemen, I respectfully, but firmly, tender my resignation as ale-taster of the Forest, an office which I have held for seven years without any salary or fee of any description. During that period I have done my duty both to his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch* and to the inhabitants generally. From feelings of humanity I refrain from suggesting anyone as my successor, for unless he possesses an iron constitution, if he does his duty to the appoint-

*Tenders his
resignation.*

* His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch is Lord of the Honor of Clitheroe, of which the Forest of Rossendale constitutes a part.

ment, he will either be a dead man before the next court day or he will have to retire with a shattered constitution."

Which is declined.

The Court, however, declined to entertain Mr. Taylor's petition, and reappointed him to the office he had so long filled with so much credit to himself—though with very questionable benefit—and to the advantage of the many thirsty souls within his jurisdiction.

Notwithstanding the remark at the opening of the petition, Dick, as a matter of fact, was not altogether unused to public speaking. At town's meetings he frequently held forth, and his rising was always welcomed as the signal for some sensible as well as humorous and sarcastic remarks.

"Kirk Fair."

The reference to "Kirk Fair," and to the quality of the ales sold there on those occasions, will be appreciated. I do not know what the Fair may be now, but within my recollection the streets of the village, for three successive days, were thronged with a surging mass of people on pleasure bent. As many of these came long distances in the heat of summer, with their parched throats and high spirits, they were naturally less critical of the quality of their drink than at ordinary times, and the publicans, with what amount of truth beyond the declara-

tion of the official ale-taster I am not prepared to vouch, were suspected of taking advantage of the circumstances to thin down their ales.

The post of ale-taster, though still nominally maintained, is in reality obsolete, and could not be revived, even in out-of-the-way places, without committing an anachronism. Even in Dick Taylor's day the office was looked upon as belonging to the past—a relic of a bygone age, in which a different social system to the present prevailed. It belonged to the days of stocks and pillories, of ducking and cucking stools, and scolds' bridles, of sluggard wakeners, and dog whippers. *Tempora mutantur*. It needed a genial humourist to assume the duties of the office in this latter half of the nineteenth century, and a vulgar imitator would find no favour.

The post of
ale-taster.

In a wide and populous district the duties, when conscientiously performed, were more than mortal stomach could bear unharmed, even though the paunch were like that of Falstaff, which Dick's was not, and leaving out of account the temptations which beset such an official. Dick took to ale-tasting as a jest, though he performed his duties with an imperturbable gravity that enhanced the fun of the situation. Keen as was his taste for ale, he had a keener relish for the

Its difficulties
and temptations

humour of the position. Alas! it was joking perilously near to the edge of a precipice. The last of the Ale-tasters died, a martyr to duty, on the 10th day of October, 1876. *Sic itur ad astra.*

JOHN CRITCHLEY PRINCE.

"Alas! each wish is wiser than the deed."

John Critchley
Prince.

The life and writings of John Critchley Prince afford a remarkable example of the power which is sometimes given to express beautiful and noble thoughts in becoming and even elegant language, in spite of deficiency in education and a bringing up amidst surroundings of the most abject and depressing character. Bearing the circumstances of his training—or rather, lack of training—in mind, Prince's sustained flow of language is marvellous, and the gracefulness and efflorescence of his diction are not less striking.

At the outset it may be admitted that John Critchley Prince was not a great poet. That he *was* a poet no one will dispute, and that he holds a leading place amongst the minor English bards is equally incontestible.

Story of his life.

The story of his life—his poor, miserable life, especially in his latter years—I do not care to tell; but that story is given in detail by Dr.

Lithgow, and may be summarised in a few sentences. Prince was born at Wigan in the year 1808. He had a wretched father—selfish, intemperate, harsh in his conduct, threatening, and, on occasions, inflicting dire chastisement on the son for attempting, after a long day's drudgery, to gratify his taste for reading. The conduct of this parent was simply inhuman in its brutality. On the other hand, his mother was a woman of superior mould, and strove, under adverse conditions, to afford him such education as he obtained in his early years. Prince inherited the paternal habits of intemperance with all his mother's good qualities. He married before he was nineteen. Of the five volumes which he published during his lifetime, "Hours with the Muses" appeared in 1841, when he was thirty-three years of age. This contains "The Poet's Sabbath," the most ambitious of his productions, with much of noble imagery and poetic force and insight, in which Nature, in her different moods,

His parents.

"Hours with the Muses."

"Lends

A living music to the poet's song."

It contains also "The Contrast," and the "Epistle to a Brother Poet," his best-known and most popular pieces. His next volume, "Dreams and Realities," was issued in 1847. In this are "The Pen and the Sword," "The Sea-

"Dreams and Realities."

Other volumes:

side Sojourn," and "A Summer's Evening Sketch," the first of surpassing power of expression, the two latter of great tenderness and beauty, and each sufficient in itself to justify his claim to the title of poet. "The Poetic Rosary," published in 1850, contains many pieces of a more pretentious but less attractive kind, yet relieved by several poems in his simpler and more natural vein. "Autumn Leaves" appeared in 1856, and "Miscellaneous Poems" in 1861. His wife died in 1858, and after the lapse of four years he married again. He died on the 5th of May, 1866, in his 58th year, leaving his second wife and his widowed mother to survive him. The poet's remains lie buried in the graveyard of St. George's Church, Hyde.

Prince's
youthful
studies.

In his youth, Prince must have been an ardent reader of the best models in the language. This, indeed, is evident from the construction of some of his poems, and the suggestion of imitation which they convey, detracting to some extent from their originality; and as is proved by the frequent references throughout his writings to Shakspeare, Milton, Keats, and other of the poets. In one of his poems he says:—

"My ears are soothed by no melodious measures,
No work of sculptor charms my longing gaze,
No painter thrills me with exalted pleasures,
But books and thought have cheered my darkest days."

"Books and thought" were the solace to which he turned from the meaner surroundings of his life, and indeed all his poetry shows the reflective and contemplative cast of his mind. His rhythm and rhyme are faultless; he has a masculine power of expression; and besides the fulness and freshness of his pictures, drawn as they are chiefly from Nature, his skill in antithesis is equally evinced; whilst in the gift of alliteration, not forced nor carried to a tiresome excess, he excels in a remarkable degree.

The harmony of his lines is something phenomenal, showing a perfection of taste not easily acquired even under favourable conditions. If he is not a deep thinker, at least he is clear and to be understood; and in his best productions he has always a thought to express and a lesson to enforce.

The harmony of his lines.

In his younger days, before the taint of drunkenness had blighted his life, and despite his poverty, his soul was bright with the noblest aspirations. "Hours with the Muses" is aglow with evidences in proof of this. The sentiment of his lines,

"Let us strive to wean
Our hearts from selfish influences, and go
Together in the fields of Truth,"

is enforced and emphasised in many of his poems.

Corn Law days.

Prince lived his youth and manhood in an epoch of trouble, struggle, turmoil, and want—in the worst days of the oppressive Corn Laws, when restrictive legislation made the food of the suffering millions scanty and bare, and when the coarsest food kept together the body and soul of the poor. His muse, like that of Ebenezer Elliott, burst forth into maledictions against the cruelty of the laws that burdened and starved the people. But bitterly as he protested against the grinding ills to which his country was subjected, he yet enjoined the redress of the grievances of the time by the exercise of pure reason and persuasive eloquence. He does not pander to poverty any more than to wealth; and though he complains of the heartlessness of the votaries of luxury who can witness unmoved the ills of the poor, he does not attempt to instil into the minds of the masses a hatred for those born in a higher sphere. This is all the more praiseworthy when it is remembered how many men in his day advocated physical force as a means, and the best, and, as some counselled, the only means of ameliorating the wrongs suffered by the labourer. In one of his poems he asks—

"A Fragment
for the People."

"Is it not sad to see a mass of men—
The sinews of the State—the heart of wealth—

The never-falling life-blood of the land—
 Is it not sad to see them stand like trees
 Swayed by the breath of every wind that blows ;
 Drinking with greedy ear the specious tale
 Of some deluding orator ? And, when
 The artful speaker with a flourish makes
 The accustomed pause, shouting, they know not why,
 Acting, they know not how—till, having sent
 The exulting demagogue in triumph home,
 They find, alas ! what they have ever found,
 For freedom—scorn, and words instead of bread.”

Riot and outrage found in him an implacable
 foe, and his aversion to aggressive war was
 intense and burning.

“The world grows weary of this sad unrest,
 This nightmare of its myriad-hearted breast,
 This monster, breathing horror in its path,
 This hideous thing of recklessness and wrath ;
 New thoughts, new deeds, more kindred to the skies,
 Pregnant with better destinies arise,
 And 'mong the old iniquities of men
 The mighty Sword shall fall before the mightier Pen !”

Prince's message was one of “Peace and goodwill”
 to men. He proclaimed it in words that were
 understood of the people, and it had a soothing
 and restraining effect in days when suffering and
 righteous discontent prevailed. His clear poetic
 vision rises sometimes to the sublime height of
 prophesy, and pictures the advent of a healthier
 and better day for the sons and daughters of
 toil—

Prince's
 message.

"The dawning beam
 Shall fill the world with its unclouded glow !
 Ere long the patriot's hope, the poet's dream,
 Shall change to sweet reality below ;
 And man, the slave of ignorance and strife,
 Wake to a birth of intellectual life."

"Song of
 Freedom."

And again, in his "Song of Freedom"—

"Oh, beautiful world ! thou art fertile and fair,
 But filled with oppression, and strife, and despair ;
 Hard, hard is the lot which thy children endure—
 The thousands are wealthy, the myriads are poor ;
 These lavish their blood, and their sweat, and their tears—
 Those revel in splendour, yet shudder with fears ;
 But Love shall come down to the nations, and bring
 Peace, plenty, and joy in the folds of his wing !

"Oh, Isle of my Fathers, fair Queen of the Sea !
 Men call thee the land of the fearless and free ;
 They say thou art first on the records of fame,
 They speak of thy glory, but not of thy shame !
 Despair not, my country ! for truth is revealed—
 Her hands have the fountains of knowledge unsealed !
 Thy children shall gather new life from the stream,
 Till the pains of the past are forgot as a dream."

Whilst upholding the rights and dignity of
 labour, he was careful to enjoin its necessity—

"Man must not lie on sunny leas
 Counting the daisies on the sward ;
 Duties well done must purchase ease."

The burden of
 his song.

This is the frequent burden of his song, and it
 has its effect on the character and conduct of
 many who cannot be touched by the higher poetic
 utterances. He was no mystic, needing an

interpreter to explain his meaning, but clear and vigorous in proclaiming his mission.

There is an almost entire absence of humour from Prince's poetry. The want of this is not felt where there is dramatic force and fervour, but descriptive and didactic verse needs the occasional scintillation of humour to prevent its becoming dreary and palling upon the sense. The possession of this quality of humour, if not an actual and superadded evidence of greatness in a writer, is at least a passport to enduring popularity. No quality in literature wears so well as this, or is so prolific in results both to the writer and his readers. To be didactic, and descriptive, and philosophic, with effect, is good; but so is medicine good—the difficulty is in swallowing it, especially when the potion is large. Humour is the sugar-coating of the pill, the jelly in which the powder is dissolved or hidden without being rendered inefficacious; or to vary the simile, humour is an Atlas that carries a solid world of wisdom on its shoulders.

The quality of
humour.

Prince, indeed, took a serious view of life. There was little of gentleness and gaiety, and much of tragedy, in his surroundings. Whilst sanguine of the progress of humanity, and the amelioration of the lot of the poor, he brooded with melancholy upon the wrongs under which they suffered and groaned. His breast was

A serious view
of life.

wrung with the misery he witnessed and felt, and the gloom of the picture is often stamped upon the outcome of his muse. But he was not despondent of the future, and of a time when wiser statesmanship, and more beneficent laws, and brighter conditions should prevail.

In his "Epistle to a Brother Poet," there is just an approach to the humourous, which is pleasant reading—a few scintillations of wit that sparkle with an evanescent gleam; but the lighter mood was unfamiliar to his muse, and soon vanishes, whilst he launches out into a strain of almost impassioned eloquence, which appeals to the reason and the heart. This poem of Prince's is well known, and some of its lines are as hackneyed as any other good thing in literature, but they bear repetition, though the space at our disposal affords room for only a brief extract:

"Epistle to a
Brother Poet."

"My religion is love—'tis the noblest and purest;
And my temple, the universe—widest and surest;
I worship my God through His works, which are fair,
And the joy of my thoughts is perpetual prayer.

I awake to new life with the coming of spring,
When the lark is aloft with a fetterless wing;
When the thorn and the woodbine are bursting with buds,
And the throstle is heard in the depth of the woods;
When the verdure grows bright where the rivulets run,
And the primrose and daisy look up at the sun;
When the iris of April expands o'er the plain,
And a blessing comes down in the drops of the rain;
When the skies are as pure and the breezes as mild
As the smile of my wife and the kiss of my child.

There's a harvest of knowledge in all that I see,
For a stone or a leaf is a treasure to me ;
There's the magic of music in every sound,
And the aspect of beauty encircles me round ;
Whilst the fast-gushing joy that I fancy and feel
Is more than the language of song can reveal.

Did God set His fountains of light in the skies,
That man should look up with the tears in his eyes ?
Did God make this earth so abundant and fair,
That man should look down with a groan of despair ?
Did God fill the world with harmonious life,
That man should go forth with destruction and strife ?
Did God scatter freedom o'er mountain and wave,
That man should exist as a tyrant and slave ?
Away with so hopeless, so joyless a creed,
For the soul that believes it is darkened indeed !"

It is chiefly in contemplation of Nature that the mist of sorrow dissolves from his brow like the morning cloud, and the glory of the brighter coming day lends enchantment to his song.

Books, it is true, were to him "a blessed dower," but more he loved the open book of Nature, and he interpreted its pages with sympathy and master-power. His best poems are those descriptive of the beauties of Nature, and there is a freshness as of the mountain air about many of them. His descriptions of natural scenery are full of poetic fire and energy. He revels in the beauty of the glowing landscape, and drinks inspiration from the sunset and the storm.

"A blessed
dower."

"A fluttering leaf, a waving flower, a tree
Shivering through all its foliage,"

lent inspiration to his mind.

"The summer's freedom, winter's thrall,
The calm or tempest, shade or shine,
The russet robe or snowy pall,
All Nature's garbs, he loved them all,
And deemed each change divine."

"A Summer's
Evening
Sketch."

His "Summer's Evening Sketch" is full of quiet and contemplative power, with a close observation and facile description of "the silent strength and grace" of Nature:—

"In tranquil thought, last eventide, I went my wonted way,
Along the foldings of a vale where quiet beauty lay,
To breathe the living air, and watch with fancies half divine
The clouds that gathered near the sun, to grace his grand
decline.

The new-mown meadows, smooth and broad, gay in their
second green,
The sinuous river gliding on in shadow and in sheen;
The orchard and its little cot, with low and mossy eaves,
And tiny lattice twinkling through its chequered veil of leaves.

The costly mansion, here and there, mid solemn groves and still;
The mass of deep and wave-like woods uprolling on the hill;
The grey and Gothic church that looked down on its graveyard
lone,
And on the hamlet roofs and walls coeval with its own.

Old farms remote and far apart, with intervening space
Of black'ning rock, and barren down, and pasture's pleasant face;
The white and winding road, that crept through village, vale,
and glen,
And o'er the dreary moorlands, far beyond the homes of men.

The changeful glory of the sky, the loveliness below ;
 The tree tops tinged with rosy fire, the bright pool's borrowed
 glow ;
 The blaze of windows, and the smile of fields so soon to fade,
 And, when the lingering sun went down, the tenderness of shade ;
 The throstle's still untiring song, loud as at early morn ;
 The grasshopper's shrill serenade amid the ripening corn ;
 The careless schoolboy's gleesome shout ; the low of homeward
 herds ;
 The voice of mother and of child, let loose in loving words ;
 The rose that sighed its fragrant soul upon the summer air ;
 The breath of honeysuckle wild, that met me unaware ;
 The smell of cribs where oxen lay, of dairies dim and small ;
 Of herb, and moss, and fruit, that grew within the garden wall ;
 All pleasant things that wooed the sense, in odour, sound, or
 hue,
 Came with as sweet an influence as if they had been new—
 And so disposed my mind to love, to gentleness and trust,
 I blessed all seemly forms that God life-kindled from the dust.

Thus Nature wins her peaceful way, with silent strength and
 grace,
 To souls that love her lineaments, and meet her face to face.
 Blest privilege ! to leave behind the paths of toil we trod,
 And live an hour of purity with Nature and with God !”

Take again his exquisite description of a “A Winter
 “ Winter Scene ” :—

“ I am walking the woodlands, whose tribe of old trees,
 Erect in adversity, baffle the breeze ;
 Where the many-armed, weather-warped, long-honoured oak
 Seemeth bent with the weight of his white winter cloak ;
 Where berries, like ruby drops, nestle between
 The leaves of the holly bough, glossy and green ;
 Where the pool hath no ripple, the river no sound,
 And the petrified rill hangs aloof from the ground ;

Where the sociable robin, alone on the spray,
 Saluteth my ear with his querulous lay,
 And shaketh to earth by the stir of his wings
 Such jewels as deck not the ermine of kings !
 Where the scene hath a beauty no words can disclose,
 As it lies in a solemn but splendid repose ;
 And the whole realm of majesty, silence, and light,
 In the trance of mid-winter, appears to my sight
 Like the worship of mute and inanimate things,
 Overshadowed and hushed by Omnipotent wings ;
 And my soul, in accordance with Nature, lies bare,
 Overburthened with wordless but eloquent prayer !”

His poetry is wholly free from anything approaching to grossness, whether in word or suggestion. The innocence of childhood woke the tenderest chords in his bosom, age won his reverence, and infirmity his sympathy.

Prince's
 writings.

Prince wrote much under the pressure of dire necessity, and, as might be expected, some of his effusions are unworthy of his genius. By reason of this, the publication of his complete writings is a mistake. They are calculated to repel instead of attracting readers. On the other hand, to give Prince at his best would be to confer a boon in which many would take delight, whilst it would be doing justice to the memory and fame of the poet. From his writings a selection might easily be made, which, for choiceness and poetic force, it would be difficult to surpass.

His
 temperament.

Prince was by nature and temperament

unfitted to maintain a family, or even to earn his own daily bread by hand labour. He was stimulated to write, and his writings brought him but scant reward in a monetary sense. He often essayed "to leave behind the path of wretchedness he trod, and live a life of purity," and though he failed miserably in his aspirations, there is much in the circumstances of his life to explain and palliate his failure. It may be said—indeed it has been urged—that he devoted himself to poetry to the neglect of other means of earning a living. In a sense that is true; but a study of the life and character of the man reveals the fact that it was inevitable in his case.

To young men it may be recommended to employ their taste for literature, and the facility they may possess for writing, in furthering their proper business—the business on the pursuit of which they primarily depend for a livelihood. The exclusive pursuit of literature is a curse to those who in humble circumstances cannot make a respectable livelihood by it. Nothing is so pleasant as a relaxation from the grosser cares, or so well calculated to adorn life and character, as the gift of expressing noble and beautiful thoughts. When, however, a man fancies himself, say, a poet, when he can only pen pleasing verse, and gives himself—his time and his

The taste for
literature.

Misguided
mortals.

energies—to its production, to the neglect of his proper vocation, it is a grave misfortune for him, and can only bring chagrin and disappointment in its train. Such misguided mortals cross our path at times, and we have been pained to meet them going along with vacant stare, “their eye in a fine frenzy rolling.” It is not the constraining power of genius within them which produces this effect, but simply a want of judgment, and it is sad to think that only misfortune and neglect can awaken them from their delusion.

A genuine son
of song.

Prince, be it observed, is not to be charged with anything of this kind. He was a genuine son of song, impelled by his genius to write, and it was his misfortune rather than his fault that his productions failed to procure him the bread which perisheth. Often assisted by benevolent friends, he never enjoyed a stated pension from any public fund, though he earned one, and he would have been a fitting recipient for such bounty. True, Prince had much of the Bohemian and something of the vagabond in his character. The usual lack of foresight which distinguishes the tribe, characterised his actions. Want of work, or sudden impulse, frequently sent him roaming over the country, whence, after many days, he would return poorer than when he set out. Seated in the quaint parlour of the Sun

Inn, the humble but noted hostelry in Long Millgate—that classic neighbourhood of busy and Croesus-worshipping Manchester—under the very shadow of the Cathedral Church, the Grammar School, and the famous Chetham Library, erst-while presided over by that ancient and venerable Falstaffian bookworm, James Crossley, who led a kind of riotous life among musty tomes—in the Sun Inn, seated in the poet's corner, and around and near him the congenial spirits who were wont to assemble there, Prince was in the seventh heaven of delight; and this, too, in spite of the squalid meagreness of his domicile across the way. Very sad, no doubt, and much to be reprehended, but the temptation was great, and the irresolute nature of the bard was powerless to resist it. It has ever been thus. Regret is natural, but it is also unavailing, and to the worldly-wise—those who never shoot twice—may be left the duty of pointing the moral by a homily on the vagaries of genius. The record of the later years of his life is one of dense, almost unbroken, gloom; the only twinkle of humour that relieved it, and it was of a ponderous kind it must be confessed, was when, for a season, he developed the absurd notion of knocking as a stranger at his own door, and on its being answered, pretending that Prince had sent him for his overcoat or umbrella.

The Sun Inn.

A bookworm.

An old story.

A twinkle of humour.

The dual nature.

Of most men it may be said that they are dual in their nature—possessed by antagonistic spirits, the one prompting to aspirations towards the higher life, the other perversely, through life's journey, clogging the weary and tremulous feet of the wayfarer. Happy is he in whom the better spirit predominates and finally prevails. The baleful presence, which was Prince's largely by inheritance, was strong upon him, and dogged his footsteps with merciless pertinacity. It cannot, however, be said with any degree of truth that his better nature ever suffered total eclipse. It asserted itself, indeed, in his darkest and most degraded hours, and to the last day of his blurred and embittered life.

Prince's characteristics.

With his tall and somewhat ungainly figure, his sombre expression of countenance, and his unkempt locks, his was, in his later years, when intemperate habits had got the mastery of him, a decidedly unattractive personality. We need care little for that, except in so far as his own individual happiness and that of his family was abridged. We remember his darkened life only that we may forget it. In his adolescent years he was bright and hopeful and aspiring enough, and now we care most to judge him by his brightest and best.

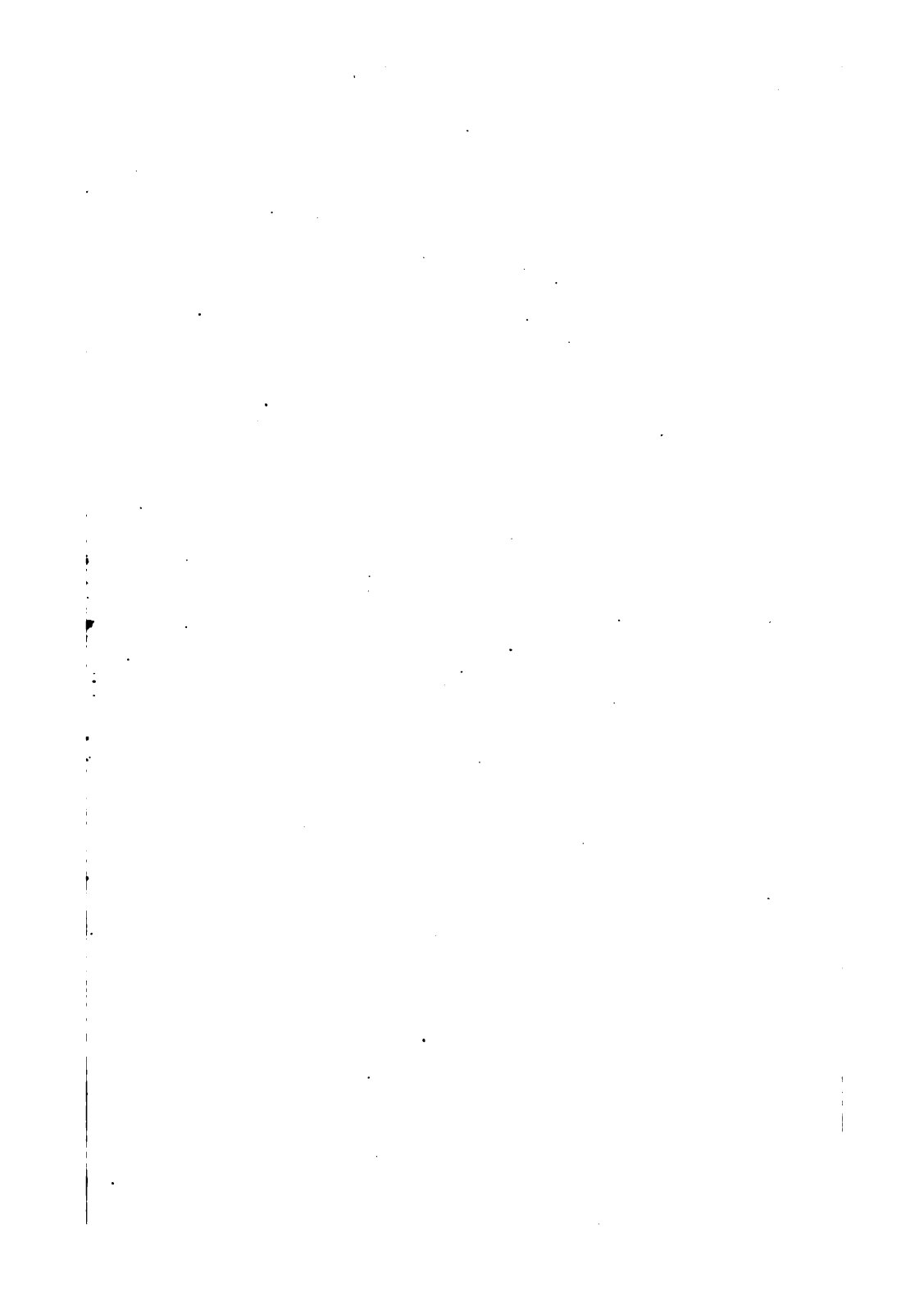
To how many are the daily associations of squalid poverty and want of comparatively small import. Not so to Prince, with his warm poetic temperament, his observant nature, and refined sense of grace and beauty. Bitter, indeed, was his earthly lot! With what a feeling of shame and remorse of soul he recalls his derelictions! To his credit be it said, he never fell from the path of rectitude into open crime and misdeed. His better nature was ever striving to assert itself, and he devoted his muse to the assuaging of the ills of humanity by singing many a humble song of tenderness, and trustfulness, and beauty, which we would not willingly let die.

His better
nature.

“ Perchance my lay hath ever been unsuited to the ear
Of those who feast on fiery thought, on bitter taunt and jeer ;
But I am not of those who deem that words unwise and wild
Can earn one blessing for the poor, and make men reconciled.

A little song of cheerfulness to make their labours light ;
A strain to open out their souls, and make them think aright ;
A lesson which may lead them on to mend their common weal,
But not the stern anathema of false and factious zeal.

There are who with a puny pride my outward errors scan,
Alas ! what little power is theirs to judge the inner man !
They think that my poor yielding heart, that impulse still
controls,
Is narrow as their sympathies, and niggard as their souls.



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